DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 233 567 FL 013 863

AUTHOR	Welmers, Beatrice F.; Welmers, William E.
TITLE	Igbo.
INSTITUTION	Peace Corps, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	64
NOTE	99p.; Preliminary edition.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	African Languages; Drills (Practice); Grammar; *Igbo; Intonation; Pronunciation; *Second Language Instruction; Tone Languages; Uncommonly Taught Languages

ABSTRACT

Twelve lessons in Igbo, the major language of Nigeria, are provided. The lessons are designed for use with a native speaker serving as a model. They cover pronunciation, major grammatical patterns, and limited practical conversation. The tonal aspects of Igbo pronunciation are emphasized. Suggestions are offered to enhance students' understanding of the techniques of language learning. Each lesson contains drills and explanations of basic concepts. (RW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED233567

IGBO

Beatrice F. Welmers
and
William E. Welmers

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
● Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Peace Corps
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

FL013863

Los Angeles, California
1964

Preliminary edition -- not for reproduction

Introduction.

Igbo (Ibo) is the largest single language in the Eastern Region of Nigeria, spoken in a variety of dialects by perhaps four million people. Until very recently, there has been almost no usable material on Igbo reflecting any adequate analysis of the language. The following lesson materials are largely the product of analyzing and teaching Igbo during Peace Corps training programs and intensive summer programs since 1961. The transcription of Igbo used is in most respects the standard orthography currently used in Nigeria, though there are minor differences in a few symbols, and tone marking -- which is indispensable for the learner of the language -- is incorporated throughout.

These lessons are designed to cover the pronunciation and the major grammatical patterns of Igbo at the maximum rate consistent with accuracy and thorough drill. Completing these lessons under ideal classroom supervision will naturally result in a more extensive and more perfect control of Igbo patterns, and will add considerable vocabulary, but even an incomplete coverage will enable the carefully guided student to continue his learning process after he begins using the language in daily life.

These lessons should be used only with a native speaker of Igbo as a model, and also a guide or supervisor with substantial training in descriptive linguistics and language pedagogy. Each Igbo utterance should be repeated in direct imitation of a native speaker until the pronunciation is pretty well mastered. It is the function of the guide to help the student by such devices as comparing his pronunciation of English with that of Igbo, by humming or whistling tone sequences, by providing brief explanations of the grammatical patterns being drilled, and by suggesting variations on the drills. While the native speaker as a model is indispensable, he is largely unconscious of the patterns of his own language (as we are of ours) and of the students' difficulties; he is in no position to answer the kinds of questions that students are bound to raise. Attempts to use these materials with tape recordings for "self-instruction" cannot normally be expected to produce adequate results.

The goal of these materials is four-fold:

(1) To train the student to pronounce Igbo with a high degree of accuracy; since the aspect of pronunciation most likely to be ignored under other circumstances is tone, there is particular emphasis on that aspect of the phonology.

(2) To introduce the student to the major grammatical patterns of Igbo; since unfamiliar and unexpected grammatical patterns are a major source of frustration in unguided language

learning, an effort is made to teach the student to analyze for himself as he goes along.

(3) To enable the student to engage in limited but useful conversation on some topics; this is designed to overcome the natural initial timidity in using a new language.

(4) To teach the techniques of language learning, so that the student can continue his learning among the Igbo people with a minimum of mystification, confusion, and frustration.

The variety of dialects in Igbo is such that a number of words commonly used in one area are not recognizable at all in another area. Some verbal constructions are completely different in different dialects. Even obviously related words may vary in pronunciation from place to place. Yet the dialects are sufficiently similar that Igbo speakers from different areas can generally understand each other, though perhaps with some difficulty. An effort was made some years ago to encourage the use of a somewhat artificial dialect known as "Union Igbo"; this effort was far from completely successful, but most educated people do attempt to avoid some extreme localisms from their own home towns, and call their modified dialects "Central Igbo" or "Standard Igbo". Different speakers may still disagree, often vigorously, on what is the "best" form or usage; frequently we can only guess what would be most widely understood and most agreeably accepted. Rather than make any claim that the form of Igbo used in these lessons is a universally acceptable "ideal" or "standard", the authors frankly prefer to label it "Compromise Igbo" in full recognition of the problem. It can still be expected that sooner or later the student will be told by a native speaker that "That isn't the way to say it". This simply means that there are different forms of Igbo, not that one is right and the other wrong, or that one is better than any other.

A number of speakers of Igbo have contributed heavily to the development of these lesson materials, not only by their obvious competence in the language, but as much by their patience and understanding in working with the authors and with students. Particular credit and gratitude is due to Mr. Benjamin Akpati, Mr. Austin Esogbue, and Mrs. Sarah Onyekwere. The Igbo materials themselves were gathered and transcribed almost entirely by Mrs. Beatrice F. Welmers, whose experience in teaching Igbo has also to a large extent dictated the order of presentation. Details of linguistic analysis reflected in the lessons are largely the product of joint research, usually in the form of a statement suggested by one author and verified by the other. Professor William E. Welmers is generally responsible for the wording of the phonologic and grammatical explanations, and for the lesson format and manuscript preparation.

Since these lessons are intended to be intensely practical, it may seem strange that they do not start right out with some lively, useful daily conversations. There is good reason, however, for the procedure used. For one not used to a second language, and particularly a tone language, accurate pronunciation is difficult to achieve; but it is also crucially important. The drills that may seem monotonous at first are actually a golden opportunity to learn to control pronunciation at the outset, so that habits of sloppy pronunciation will never have a good chance to develop. At the same time, every utterance in every drill is a perfectly good and natural utterance that will be found useful in daily life.

The most important preliminary warning that can be given the student is this: when you imitate what you have heard, do not try simultaneously to ask by your intonation "Did I say it right?" If you do, the last syllable of your Igbo sentence will rise to a higher pitch -- and that will automatically be dead wrong in almost every possible instance. The number of ways in which an Igbo sentence can end, tonally, is limited; but it is absolutely essential to imitate accurately, and to avoid superimposing English intonations on Igbo sentences. Don't try to ask questions in Igbo by intonation -- Igbo has its own question-asking devices of quite a different type. Don't try to speak with "expression" or "enthusiasm" or "emphasis" -- you will be sure to distort the tones which are essential to being understood.

The details of Igbo pronunciation will be outlined step by step in the early lessons. Try to imitate every detail accurately, but don't expect everything to be explained at once; concentrate on the points emphasized in each drill as you go along. The same is true of grammar: don't try to anticipate new forms and constructions, or you will only confuse yourself and everyone else. Don't worry about what you haven't learned to say; concentrate on saying what you have learned, and saying it accurately. The goal is to speak not so that you can be understood, but so that you cannot be misunderstood.

Lesson 1.

In a fairly long Igbo sentence, there may be a large number of different levels of pitch; but every pitch can be described in terms of one of three alternative possibilities at any particular point in the sentence.

First, the mark ´ represents a phenomenon that will be called "step". The pitch of a vowel or m or n or ŋ so marked is never low. In any Igbo utterance, each "step" is a little lower than the preceding one. You can only step down, and once you have done so you cannot climb up again until you come to a pause at the end of a phrase or sentence. Thus the sequence "step - step" is something like the melody of the beginning of the song "Chlo-e", or like a child's call "Daddy!".

Second, the mark ` indicates "low". A "low" is distinctly lower in pitch than a "step" either before or after it. The sequence "step - low - step" is something like the melody at the beginning of the World War I song "Over There".

Third, any vowel (or m, n, ŋ as will be explained later) which is unmarked has the same pitch as that indicated by the last mark before it. Such unmarked syllables after a "step" will be called "same". After "low", unmarked syllables will also be labelled "low". The sequence "step - same" is thus two syllables on a monotone; the second syllable must be on exactly the same pitch as the first. The sequence "low - low" (in which only the first low is marked) is also level, but on a lower pitch than a "step - same"; at the end of a sentence, "low - low" may go a bit downhill in pitch, but it sounds nothing like two successive "steps". A final "low" is relaxed, much like the ending of a simple declarative sentence in English.

Igbo has eight vowel sounds; not one of them is exactly like any English vowel, but you will not find all of them difficult to recognize or reproduce. The vowels are written: i, į, e, a, ǫ, o, ų, u; the marks under some of the letters (usually a dot or a short vertical stroke rather than the cedilla used here) are part of the vowel symbols themselves: to a speaker of Igbo, the vowel written ų is as different from u as it is from o. For the time being, imitate these vowel sounds as carefully as you can, though the major point emphasized in the first several drills is tone. There are also some consonant sounds that will be strange to you; you will be helped with them as difficulties arise.

Drill 1. Each of the following sentences begins with the sequence "step - low", and continues with syllables that are "low" to the end. Thus each sentence has a melody somewhat like the English sentence "THEY were coming." Remember that in Igbo, however, the higher pitch at the beginning has absolutely nothing to do with emphasis.

It's a bed.	ọ́ bụ̀ akwa.
It's a pot.	ọ́ bụ̀ ite.
It's a monkey.	ọ́ bụ̀ eŋwe.
It's a bag.	ọ́ bụ̀ akpa.
It's the ground.	ọ́ bụ̀ ala.
He saw a bed.	ọ́ hụ̀rụ akwa.
He saw a pot.	ọ́ hụ̀rụ ite.
He saw a monkey.	ọ́ hụ̀rụ eŋwe.
He saw a bag.	ọ́ hụ̀rụ akpa.
He saw the ground.	ọ́ hụ̀rụ ala.

Drill 2. Each of the sentences in this drill differs in tone from those in Drill 1 only in that the very last syllable is a "step"; that is, the pitch goes up again with the last syllable, but not quite as high as the initial "step".

It's a cup.	ọ́ bụ̀ ikó.
It's an egg.	ọ́ bụ̀ akwá.
It's a rat.	ọ́ bụ̀ oké.
It's a squirrel.	ọ́ bụ̀ ọsá.
It's a compound.	ọ́ bụ̀ ezí.
He saw a cup.	ọ́ hụ̀rụ ikó.
They saw an egg.	há hụ̀rụ akwá.
They saw a rat.	há hụ̀rụ oké.
They saw a squirrel.	há hụ̀rụ ọsá.
They saw a compound.	há hụ̀rụ ezí.

Drill 3. In this drill, each sentence again begins with the sequence "step - low"; but this time the last two syllables are "step - same". Be sure the pitch of your voice goes up at the right time, and then stays at exactly that level.

It's an elephant.	ọ́ bụ̀ ényi.
It's a goat.	ọ́ bụ̀ éwu.
It's a chair.	ọ́ bụ̀ óce.

It's an animal. or It's meat.	ó̩ bù̩ ányu̩.
It's salt.	ó̩ bù̩ ńnu.

They saw an elephant.	há hù̩ru̩ énya.
They saw a goat.	há hù̩ru̩ éwu.
He saw a chair.	ó̩ hù̩ru̩ óce.
They saw an animal.	há hù̩ru̩ ányu̩.
He saw salt.	ó̩ hù̩ru̩ ńnu.

Drill 4. The sentences in this drill differ from those in Drill 3 only in that the last syllable is another "step", a little lower than the preceding syllable. Since each sentence begins with a "step", there are three levels of pitch in these sentences in addition to low. Note the "terraced" effect of the "steps"; at the same time, be sure the "low" between steps is low enough.

It's money.	ó̩ bù̩ égó.
It's a leopard.	ó̩ bù̩ ágú̩.
It's a stirring spoon.	ó̩ bù̩ ékú.
It's kola nuts.	ó̩ bù̩ ó̩jí̩.
It's a farm.	ó̩ bù̩ úgbó.

They saw money.	há hù̩ru̩ égó.
He saw a leopard.	ó̩ hù̩ru̩ ágú̩.
They saw a stirring spoon.	há hù̩ru̩ ékú.
He saw kola nuts.	ó̩ hù̩ru̩ ó̩jí̩.
He saw a farm.	ó̩ hù̩ru̩ úgbó.

Drill 5. A fifth (and final) type of two-syllable noun ends each of the sentences in this drill; it has the tones "step - low". Of all the sentences to this point, these have a melody that may sound most like an English statement intonation. But don't let that fool you; in Igbo, it is the tone, syllable by syllable, that counts.

It's cloth.	ó̩ bù̩ ákwà.
It's a fish.	ó̩ bù̩ ázù̩.
It's corn.	ó̩ bù̩ ó̩kà.
It's a knife.	ó̩ bù̩ ḿmà.
It's a house.	ó̩ bù̩ ú̩lò̩.

He saw cloth.	ọ́ hụ̀rụ ákwà.
They saw a fish.	há hụ̀rụ ázụ̀.
He saw corn.	ọ́ hụ̀rụ ọ́kà.
They saw a knife.	há hụ̀rụ ḿmà.
They saw a house.	há hụ̀rụ ụ́lọ̀.

Drill 6. In this drill, one noun is selected from each of the first five drills, and used in sentences of the same types. Thus the following groups of sentences emphasize the contrasts of tone rather than identities. First listen to each group of five sentences without interruption; then practice on each sentence individually; finally, try to say all five in succession, without losing anything of the tonal contrasts.

It's a bed.	ọ́ bụ̀ akwa.
It's an egg.	ọ́ bụ̀ akwá.
It's an elephant.	ọ́ bụ̀ ényi.
It's a leopard.	ọ́ bụ̀ ágụ́.
It's cloth.	ọ́ bụ̀ ákwà.

They saw a bed.	há hụ̀rụ akwa.
They saw an egg.	há hụ̀rụ akwá.
They saw an elephant.	há hụ̀rụ ényi.
They saw a leopard.	há hụ̀rụ ágụ́.
They saw cloth.	há hụ̀rụ ákwà.

Notes.

The five groups of nouns used in the above drills are typical of the majority of Igbo nouns: two syllables, the first being a vowel or a syllabic *m* or *n* or *ŋ*, the second a consonant or consonant cluster followed by a vowel, all accompanied by one of the five tone sequences illustrated above. There are some three-syllable nouns in Igbo, and some nouns beginning with consonants, but they will give little trouble once these five basic types are mastered. In isolation, the five types of nouns are labelled and written as follows:

1. Low - low:	àkwa	'a bed'
2. Low - step:	àkwá	'an egg'
3. Step - same:	ényi	'an elephant'
4. Step - step:	ágụ́	'a leopard'
5. Step - low:	ákwà	'cloth'

In the sentences on which you have drilled, the initial low tone of the first two of the above types has, of course, not been marked, because the last preceding marked tone was low.

Of these five types of nouns, the fourth, step - step, is most likely to vary in other dialects. At least some of the nouns written step - step in these lessons are pronounced as step - same in some areas. The sequence step - step nevertheless appears in all dialects in at least some circumstances.

As you begin to learn Igbo vocabulary, remember that the tone is an integral part of the word, and must be learned along with the consonants and vowels. It is true that tones sometimes undergo alternations that will surprise you, somewhat as the f in English wife changes to v in the plural wives. But the existence of this alternation in English does not permit us to interchange f and v whenever we feel like it; neither does the existence of variant tonal forms in Igbo permit us to ignore tone. First learn the words as they have been introduced, including their tones; the variants will be systematically presented as the lessons progress.

A few words about consonants, consonant clusters, and syllabic nasals. The writings kp and gb represent single consonants, not sequences of k and p or g and b. The closure at the back of the mouth for k (or g) and at the lips for p (or b) is simultaneous; the releases are also simultaneous. These will not be easy consonants at first, but with practice you can learn them. (You have probably used a consonant similar to the Igbo kp in imitating a hen cackling; in Igbo orthography, a common American imitation would be written "kpǫ́ kpǫ kpǫ kpǫ kpǫ".)

The letter c represents a consonant much like that which is written ch in English; c always represents this sound in our writing of Igbo, so that there is no need to add another letter to show what the sound is.

The letter ŋ represents a sound like that represented by ng in English sing or singer. Be sure to avoid adding a g as you do in English finger.

The clusters kw, ny, and ŋw have appeared so far. These are not particularly hard to recognize or reproduce, but remember that the syllable division precedes them, never splits them.

In other sequences, Igbo m, n, and ŋ may occur before another consonant. In such cases, they are syllables by themselves, with their own tone. Be sure you don't use a vowel either before or after such a syllabic nasal; just hum-m-m it and then go on-n-n to the next consonant.

Lesson 2.

All the sentences you have drilled on up to now have begun with a form /ọ́/ 'he, she, it' (Igbo does not distinguish these) or /há/ 'they'. The tone of these forms has always been "step". To convert these statements into questions, the tone of these forms is simply changed to "low". There is no change in word order, and above all no rising intonation of any kind. A "step" later in the question will, to be sure, sound higher than in a statement, but this is simply because it is the first rather than the second step in the utterance; the first "step" is always the highest point in pitch. To help you associate questions with the tone of the pronoun alone, and to help you avoid a rising intonation, question marks are deliberately not used.

Drill 1. Begin right now to associate questions with low-tone pronouns, and their answers with step-tone pronouns. Be sure you are also conscious of the tones of final nouns; the patterns you have learned are not used in the same carefully controlled order from now on.

Is it a pot?	ọ̀ bụ ite.
Yes, it's a pot.	ée. ọ́ bụ̀ ite.
Is it a monkey?	ọ̀ bụ eŋwe.
No, it's a squirrel.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ọsá.
Is it an egg?	ọ̀ bụ akwá.
Yes, it's an egg.	ée. ọ́ bụ̀ akwá.
Is it a squirrel?	ọ̀ bụ ọsá.
No, it's a goat.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ éwu.
Is it a chair?	ọ̀ bụ óce.
Yes, it's a chair.	ée. ọ́ bụ̀ óce.
Is it an elephant?	ọ̀ bụ ényi.
No, it's a leopard.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ágụ́.
Is it a farm?	ọ̀ bụ úgbó.
Yes, it's a farm.	ée. ọ́ bụ̀ úgbó.
Is it money?	ọ̀ bụ égó.
No, it's corn.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ọ́kà.

Is it a knife?	ọ̀ bụ ḿmà.
Yes, it's a knife.	ée. ọ́ bụ̀ ḿmà.
Is it cloth?	ọ̀ bụ ákwà.
No, it's a bag.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ akpa.
Is it a fish?	ọ̀ bụ ázụ̀.
No, it's an animal.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ánụ.
Is it kola nuts?	ọ̀ bụ ọ́jị́.
No, it's salt.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ńnu.

Drill 2. The forms for 'you' (speaking to one person only) and 'I' behave like the froms for 'he-she-it' and 'they' in that they have step tone in statements and low tone in questions. Note, however, that the form for 'I' consists of two parts: /á/ before the verb plus /m̀/ after the verb. It is the two parts together that correspond to 'I'; either without the other is meaningless. With these forms and a few new verbs you can put together a variety of other questions and answers like the following:

Did he see a rat?	ọ̀ hụrụ oké.
No, he saw a squirrel.	ḿbà. ọ́ hụ̀rụ ọsá.
Did he see any animals?	ọ̀ hụrụ ánụ.
Yes, he saw an elephant.	ée. ọ́ hụ̀rụ ényi.
Did you see a house?	ị̀ hụrụ ụ́lọ̀.
No, I saw a compound.	ḿbà. á hụ̀rụ m ezí.
Did you see a chair?	ị̀ hụrụ óce.
Yes, I saw a chair.	ée. á hụ̀rụ m óce.
Do you want eggs?	ị̀ cọrọ akwá.
No, I want meat.	ḿbà. á cọ̀rọ m ánụ.
Do you want money?	ị̀ cọrọ égó.
Yes, I want money.	ée. á cọ̀rọ m égó.
Do you want a knife?	ị̀ cọrọ ḿmà.
No, I want a cup.	ḿbà. á cọ̀rọ m ikó.
Does he want a pot?	ọ̀ cọrọ ite.
No, he wants a bag.	ḿbà. ọ́ cọ̀rọ akpa.

Does he want corn?	ọ̀ cọrọ ọ́kà.
No, he wants fish.	ḿbà. ọ́ cọ̀rọ ázụ̀.
Did she wash the pot?	ọ̀ sara [illegible]e.
Yes, she washed the pot.	ée. ọ́ sàra ite.
Did you wash the clothes?	ị̀ sara ákwà.
Yes, I washed the clothes.	ée. á sàra m ákwà.
Did you wash the bag?	ị̀ sara akpa.
Yes, I washed the bag.	ée. á sàra m akpa.

Drill 3. Up to this point, the singular pronouns which you have used have had the following forms:

'he-she-it': /ọ́/ in statements, /ọ̀/ in questions.
'you' (one): /ị́/ in statements, /ị̀/ in questions.
'I': /á ... m̀/ in statements, (/à ... m̀/ in questions).

With the verbs that are introduced in this drill, the vowels of these pronouns are respectively /o, i, e/ instead of /ọ, ị, a/. Pay careful attention to the pronunciation; the distinction will be explained in the Notes at the end of this lesson. While the variation in vowels in these pronouns is most important, note that the form for 'they' (/há/ in statements, /hà/ in questions) is invariable as far as its vowel is concerned.

Did she cook eggs?	ò siri akwá.
No, she cooked meat.	ḿbà. ó siri ánụ.
Did she cook corn?	ò siri ọ́kà.
No, she cooked fish.	ḿbà. ó siri ázụ̀.
Do you have a cup?	ì ŋwere ikó.
Yes, I have a cup.	ée. é ŋwère m ikó.
Do you have money?	ì ŋwere égó.
No, I have salt.	ḿbà. é ŋwère m ńnu.
Do you have meat?	ì ŋwere ánụ.
No, I have fish.	ḿbà. é ŋwère m ázụ̀.
Did you hide the money?	ì zoro égó.
Yes, I hid the money.	ée. é zòro m égó.

Did he hide the knife?	ò zoro ḿmà.
Yes, he hid the knife.	ée. ó zòro ḿmà.
Do they have kola nuts?	hà ŋwere ọ́jị́.
No, they have eggs.	ḿbà. há ŋwère akwá.
Did you cook fish?	ì siri ázụ̀.
Yes, I cooked fish.	ée. é sìri m ázụ̀.
Did they hide the pot?	hà zoro ite.
No, they hid the cup.	ḿbà. há zòro ikó.
Does she have cloth?	ò ŋwere ákwà.
Yes, she has cloth.	ée. ó ŋwère ákwà.
Do you have a bag?	ì ŋwere akpa.
No, I have a pot.	ḿbà. é ŋwère m ite.

Drill 4. Once your control of these patterns is accurate in imitation of your model, you can begin to answer questions that are asked of you. At this stage, you can only answer affirmatively and repeat the statement with the appropriate pronoun and its statement tone, or answer negatively and use a different noun in the answer. But once you are on your own, even with these limited patterns, it becomes the more important to maintain a conscious and accurate control of tone, as well as consonants and vowels. So limit yourselves to the patterns you have drilled on, and work for accuracy in your answers. Some questions are given below to be addressed to students one by one. Do your best to give a rational answer even if you don't know the precise meaning of every word. Work without the written materials; of course, a variety of other questions can be added.

Do you have salt?	ì ŋwere ńnu.
Does he have a knife?	ò ŋwere ḿmà.
Does he want a chair?	ọ̀ cọrọ óce.
Do they want meat?	hà cọrọ ánụ.
Did she cook eggs?	ò siri akwá.
Did he hide the cup?	ò zoro ikó.
Did you wash the clothes?	ị̀ sara ákwà.
Do they have kola nuts?	hà ŋwere ọ́jị́.
Did you cook fish?	ì siri ázụ̀.
Did you see a house?	ị̀ hụrụ ụ́lọ̀.

Notes:

Each of the verb forms used so far (not counting /bụ̀/ for the time being) consists of two syllables. The two syllables in any one form always have the same vowel, and the second syllable always begins with /r/. Actually, only the first syllable of these forms represents the stem of the verb -- and at that, other forms will show that the low tone is not the basic tone of the stem, but a part of this particular form. So these forms consist of a stem, plus a suffix made up of /r/ and the vowel of the stem, plus low tone throughout. For the verbs you have had, these forms are:

hụ̀rụ	'saw'	sìri	'cooked'
cọ̀rọ	'want'	ŋwère	'have'
sàra	'washed'	zòro	'hid'

Most verb forms of this type are translated by an English "past", but the verbs meaning 'want' and 'have' refer in this form to the present. The important thing right now is simply that they are all one type of form, having the same suffix.

The different vowels in singular pronouns, outlined in Drills 2 and 3 above, depend on the vowel of the verb stem that follows. Igbo vowels fall into two groups: /i, e, o, u/ on the one hand, and /ị, a, ọ, ụ/ on the other. In certain combinations, all the vowels in a sequence must belong to the same group. This is almost always true of the two vowels in a noun; there are a few exceptions, mostly in borrowed words, but check the sequences in the nouns you have had. This vowel grouping is also invariably followed with the three singular pronoun forms. The pronoun 'you', for example, is always /i/ if the vowel of the verb stem is one of the group /i, e, o, u/; but it is always /ị/ if the vowel of the verb stem is one of the group /ị, a, ọ, ụ/. It may be convenient to refer to the second group as "dotted vowels", so long as you remember that, for this purpose, /a/ is a "dotted" vowel even though it is not written with a dot under it; it corresponds to /e/ in the "undotted" series. Following this principle of vowel harmony, the pronoun-plus-verb combinations you can use are the following, with all the vowels either "undotted" or "dotted":

é sìri m; í sìri; ó sìri	á hụ̀rụ m; ị́ hụ̀rụ; ọ́ hụ̀rụ
é ŋwère m; í ŋwère; ó ŋwère	á cọ̀rọ m; ị́ cọ̀rọ; ọ́ cọ̀rọ
é zòro m; í zòro; ó zòro	á sàra m; ị́ sàra; ọ́ sàra

The form /há/ 'they' does not follow this rule of vowel harmony. As you will learn later, this is one of several ways in which /há/, along with the forms for 'we' and 'you (plural)', behave like nouns. The three singular pronouns are alike in many aspects of their behavior, but unlike 'we', 'you (pl.)' and 'they'.

Lesson 3.

The carefully controlled pronunciation that has been the focus of attention up to this point must not be relaxed even in the simplest everyday exchanges. Indeed, it is especially in expressions such as greetings and everyday amenities that you must be particularly careful to avoid expressing your "feelings" in ways that will merely introduce English intonations that are meaningless in Igbo. Igbo consonants, vowels, and above all tones are the only sounds that will be recognized by speakers of Igbo when you attempt to use these expressions. The same principle is, of course, strikingly true in the pronunciation of proper names. If you happen to have a name that is commonly mispronounced, you may have learned to live with frequent errors -- but you'll have to admit that you're pleased when you hear your name pronounced correctly. By the same token, painstaking accuracy in pronouncing Igbo names will do more to make you accepted than perhaps any one other ability you can acquire.

Dialect variation in the most frequent daily expressions, and also in proper names, should be expected. Compare the Southern American "Hey!" roughly corresponding to "Hello!" elsewhere; names like "Dorothy" and "Margaret" are pronounced with two syllables in much of the Midwest, but with three syllables elsewhere, and the vowels may be different as well; the name "Chicago" has a unique pronunciation in that city itself and within a rather small area around it. Similarly, the common greetings, farewells, and other amenities in Igbo vary from place to place, and names also have varieties of pronunciation. Some of the alternatives for common expressions are given in the drills below. Proper names are given with only one form, but don't be surprised if you hear alternative forms even from your own model in class.

Many of the expressions introduced in this lesson will later prove to be examples of widespread, productive grammatical constructions. For the time being, however, only a minimum of explanation is included -- just enough so that you will not be likely to misuse the expressions you do learn. There is no need at all for you to understand all the implications of these expressions in order to use them easily and correctly.

Drill 1. A number of common greetings center around the question-word /kèdú/, the basic meaning of which is 'how?' or 'how about?'. A common initial exchange of greetings goes as follows:

How ('s everything)?	kèdú.
[It's] fine.	ọ́ dị̀ ḿmá.

This can be extended to ask specifically "How are you?", with the answer in the first person:

How are you?	kèdú kà ị́ dị̀. - kèdú kà í mère.
I'm fine.	á dị̀ m ḿmá.

A more vigorous response, with something of the force of "Everything's just grand!", is:

ọ́ máka.

A name or term of address must come at the beginning, before the greeting /kèdú/. To address a man older than yourself, or for a woman to address a man of about her own age, the first of the following expressions is very widely used; in other contexts, /ńnà/ means 'father'. Some people also use the second expression:

How's everything, sir?	ńnà, kèdú.
or	máàzị̀, kèdú.
(in response, as before:)	ọ́ dị̀ ḿmá.

The following is the standard greeting to a woman whose name you do not know; although /ńné/ as a term of address seems to be related to the word /ǹné/ 'mother', it is used even for girls much younger than the person speaking:

How's everything, ma'am?	ńné, kèdú.
(in response, again:)	ọ́ dị̀ ḿmá.

Although you may learn other general terms of address -- and you should be careful to find out exactly the limits of their use -- the commonest greetings under other circumstances use peronsal names. The following are some typical Igbo names, most of them derived from phrases; they are written here in a way that shows only the results of certain vowel contractions; the tone mark ^ indicates a fall from step to low:

Male	Female
Òkóyè	Ŋ̀wâkaégó
Òkâfọ	Ŋ̀gbâfọ
Òkóŋkwọ	Ŋ̀gbáŋkwọ
Ŋ̀wóyè	Ŋ̀ghóyè
Ŋ̀wâka	Àdáŋkwọ
Ápugò	Òríàkụ

In greeting more than one person, a term of address is unnecessary; however, the greeting itself is then /kèdú nụ̀/.

The following is a brief, typical exchange which can be varied by using other names or a more specific greeting. Exchanges such as this should be drilled until they are automatic; but never let English intonations take the place of Igbo tones:

A.	How's everything, Okoye?	A.	Ọ̀kóyè, kèdú.
B.	Fine.	B.	ọ́ dị̀ ḿmá.
A.	How's your family?	A.	kèdú màka ńdibé gị.
B.	They're fine.	B.	há dị̀ ḿmá.

If you don't know the name of the person you are greeting, you can greet him in another way and then ask his name:

What's your name?	kèdú ahà gị́.
or	gị́nị́ bụ̀ áhà gị́.
or	áhà gị́, ọ̀ bụ gị́nị́.
My name is Nwaka.	áhà ḿ bụ̀ Ŋwâka.

Here is another exchange which can be varied in several ways:

A.	How's everything?	A.	kèdú.
B.	Fine.	B.	ọ́ dị̀ ḿmá.
A.	What's your name?	A.	gị́nị́ bụ̀ áhà gị́.
B.	My name is Okafo.	B.	áhà ḿ bụ̀ Okâfọ.
A.	Please say it again.	A.	bíkó, kwùé yá ọ̀zọ́.
B.	Okafo.	B.	Ọ̀kâfọ.
A.	Okafo. Is that good?	A.	Ọ̀kâfọ. ọ̀ dị̀ ḿmá.
B.	Fine!	B.	ọ́ dị̀ ḿmá.

Drill 2. There are also some specialized greetings for particular times or occasions. One of these begins the following exchange, which continues with another useful get-acquainted gambit:

A.	Good morning.	A.	ị̀ bọọ́la cí.
B.	Good morning (reply).	B.	á bọ̀ọ́la m cí.
A.	What's your name?	A.	kèdú ahà gị́.
B.	My name is Adankwo.	B.	áhà ḿ bụ̀ Adáŋkwọ.
A.	Where are you from?	A.	ébe óle kà í sì.
	or		èbéé kà í sì.
B.	I'm from Onitsha.	B.	é sì m Ọnịca.

A.	Please say it slowly.	A.	bíkó, kwùé yá ŋwayọ̀ọ.
B.	I'm from Onitsha.	B.	é sì m Ọnịca.

The above conversation can, of course, be varied by using different personal names, and also by using different place names. A few such town names are as follows:

Àbákalíki
Énugwú
Òweri
Lókòjá

Ụ́mụ̀áhyà
Àsábà
Ọ̀nịca
Àbáŋ̀gwa

Another specialized situation involves greeting a guest; traditional courtesy includes offering kola nuts, using an expression that alludes to breaking open a pod (about the size of an acorn squash) which contains a number of individual kola nuts (each about the size of a chestnut). This corresponds roughly to our serving cocktails before dinner. Such an exchange might be:

A.	Welcome! (Have you come?)	A.	ị̀ byála.
B.	(Reply: Yes.)	B.	ée.
A.	Come in!	A.	bàtá.
B.	Thank you.	B.	ǹdéèwó. (or dààlụ.)
A.	Let me "open kola nuts".	A.	kà ḿ waa ọjị́.

If you are welcoming someone who has been away and returned, another opening greeting is appropriate:

A.	Have you returned?	A.	ị̀ lọ́ọla.
B.	Yes.	B.	ée.

Drill 3. A few other amenities and farewells should be memorized:

An expression of condolence, used for any circumstance from your accidentally jostling someone to sympathizing with someone at the loss of a loved one:

	A.	I'm sorry.	A.	ǹdó.
	B.	(Reply)	B.	óo.
or	A.	Tell him (her) I'm sorry.	A.	sị́ yá ǹdó.
	B.	(Reply)	B.	óo.

A farewell after a conversation, a visit, or work together; this is always appropriate after class:

A. Goodbye!	A. kà ó mesya.
B. (reply, identical)	B. kà ó mesya.

A farewell until the next day; the two expressions given here can be used in reverse order just as well:

A. Goodnight!	A. kà cí foo. (- kà ó foo.)
B. Goodnight!	B. kà cí bọ̀ọ́. (- kà ọ́ bọ̀ọ́.)

Another expression that can be used in parting:

A. Stay well.	A. nọ̀dụ́ mmá.
B. (Reply form); return well.	B. óo. làdụ́ mmá.

With due reverence, but perhaps more frequently than in English, you can take leave with the following:

A. God bless you.	A. Cúkwu gòzíe gị́.
B. (Reply form); and you!	B. óo. nà gị́ ŋwà. - nà onyé gị́.

Two common expressions of compliment (to a single person) are:

"You have done [well]."	í méela.
"You have tried."	ị́ ŋwààla.

And just to keep you modest:

	A. Do you speak Igbo?	A. ị na asụ́ Ìgbo.
	B. I speak Igbo a little.	B. á nà m asụ́ Ìgbo ŋ́wa-ntị-ntị.
or	A. Do you understand Igbo?	A. ị na anụ́ Ìgbo.
	B. I understand Igbo a little.	B. á nà m anụ́ Ìgbo ŋ́wa-nti-nti.

Notes:

You have probably often heard sequences of sounds that do not seem to match what you see written. Remember that the final authority is a speaker of Igbo, not a written transcription. What is written in these lessons is generally a rather slow, careful speech. In more rapid speech, vowels are often elided in some combinations; for example, the expression for 'here', written /ébe à/, sounds like /ébáà/. Forms like /ébe à/ are written for two reasons: (1) almost any Igbo speaker will slow down to such pronunciations if your imitation is not very good, and (2) the transcription is intended among other things to display the lexical and grammatical components of each phrase. Learn to speed up to the faster forms, imitating what you hear no matter what the transcription suggests.

The spelling /gh/ represents a single consonant which may be difficult for you. The back of the tongue should be held close enough to the soft palate to cause audible friction when air passes that point, but not so close as to stop the flow of air completely, which is how a /g/ is pronounced.

Doubly-written vowels represent prolonged vowel sounds. Our English speech patterns create a tendency to make diphthongs out of such double vowels, but in Igbo the vowel quality must remain precisely the same throughout. The Igbo /ée/, for example, is quite different from the ending of either English "day" or the informal "yeah". Similarly, Igbo /óo/ is quite different from the English letter-name "O".

In Lesson 2, there was a note about the function of the two groups of Igbo vowels: /i, e, o, u/ as opposed to /ị, a, ọ, ụ/. No effort was made to tell you exactly how to pronounce each one, because the distinctions involve muscular movements that we are not used to controlling consciously. Now that you have experimented and perhaps succeeded most of the time, and at least have gotten used to hearing them, an explanation may be helpful. The "dotted" vowels of Igbo can also be described as "tense"; they are produced with the very back or "root" of the tongue slightly tightened up, narrowing the passage in the upper throat. The "undotted" vowels, by contrast, are "lax"; the tongue is more relaxed during their articulation. Listen to and practice the following groups of words:

ényi	ọ́jị
óce	áhà
égó	ọ́lọ̀
ńnu	ányụ

Lesson 4.

Some additional vocabulary and a new verbal construction are introduced in this lesson. As you learn the new construction, you will find it necessary to learn also a new tonal shape for two of the five tonal types of nouns. This is part of a larger pattern of tonal alternation that will be introduced one stage at a time. At each stage, try to establish a clear mental "sound track" for a few key sentences; the patterns will then eventually become automatic.

Drill 1. The question-answer exchanges suggested by this drill all use nouns with low tone throughout. There are obviously many more possible combinations than those given here; the purpose of this drill is to prepare you to use any appropriate combination of verb and noun.

What did he buy?	gị́nị kà ọ́ zụ̀rụ.
He bought a pot.	ọ́ zụ̀rụ ite.
Did she make (mold) a pot?	ọ̀ kpụrụ ite.
Yes, she made a pot.	ée. ọ́ kpụ̀rụ ite.
What did he steal?	gị́nị kà ó zùru.
He stole a bag.	ó zùru akpa.
What did they sell?	gị́nị kà há rère.
They sold a basket.	há rère ŋkata.
What did you do?	gị́nị kà í mère.
I killed a monkey.	é gbùru m eŋwe.
Did you reach the town?	ị ruru obodo.
Yes, I reached the town.	ée. é rùru m obodo.
What is he buying?	gị́nị kà ọ́ nà azụ́.
He's buying a pot.	ọ́ nà azụ́ ite.
What are you making (molding)?	gị́nị kà ị́ nà akpụ́.
I'm making a pot.	á nà m akpụ́ ite.
Is he stealing a bag?	ọ̀ na ezú àkpa.
No, he's stealing a basket.	ḿbà. ọ́ nà ezú ŋ̀kata.

What are you selling?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ nà eré.
I'm selling bread.	á nà m eré àcịca.
What are you doing?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ nà emé.
I'm looking for a bed.	á nà m acọ́ àkwa.
Are they buying bread?	hà na azụ́ àcịca.
No, they're buying beans.	ḿbà. há nà azụ́ àgwa.

Drill 2. In this similar drill, all the nouns are in the group that you have learned as low-step. They appear with those tones in the first set of questions and answers below, using the "past" construction. In the second set, however, all such nouns have the tones step-same. This is a perfectly regular alternation under definable circumstances.

What did he do?	gị́nị́ kà ó mère.
He killed a rat.	ó gbùru oké.
Did you see the compound?	ị hụrụ ezí.
Yes, I saw the compound.	ée. á hụ̀rụ m ezí.
What did you buy?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ zụ̀rụ.
I bought eggs.	á zụ̀rụ m akwá.
Did he wash the cups?	ọ̀ sara ikó.
No, he took a bath.	ḿbà. ọ́ sàra ahụ́.
Did he tell a lie?	ọ̀ sịrị asị́.
Yes, he told a lie.	ée. ọ́ sịrị asị́.
Did they eat avocados?	hà rara ubé.
Yes, they ate avocados.	ée. há ràra ubé.

What is he doing?	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ nà emé.
He's killing a squirrel.	ọ́ nà egbú ọ́sa.
Do you see the compound?	ị na ahụ́ ézi.
Yes, I see the compound.	ée. á nà m ahụ́ ézi.
Are they selling eggs?	hà na eré ákwa.
No, they're selling avocados.	ḿbà. há nà eré úbe.

Are you washing the cups?	ị na asá íko.
No, I'm taking a bath.	ḿbà. á nà m asá áhụ.
What is he eating?	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ nà atá.
He's eating eggs.	ọ́ nà atá ákwa.
Are they telling lies?	hà na asị́ ásị.
Yes, they're telling lies.	ée. há nà asị́ ásị.

Drill 3. In this drill, all the nouns are in the group you have learned as step-same. Again, they appear in the "past" construction with the tones as you have learned them. But in the second set of exchanges below, all such nouns have the tones same-step. This is another regular alternation, the conditions for which will be explained after you see more of the evidence.

What did you see?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ hụ̀rụ.
I saw an elephant.	á hụ̀rụ m ényi.
What did she do?	gị́nị́ kà ó mère.
She cooked soup.	ó tère ófe.
Did she eat (food)?	ò riri ńrí.
Yes, she ate meat.	ée. ó riri ánụ.
What did you buy?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ zụ̀rụ.
I bought a chair.	á zụ̀rụ m óce.
Did she cook cassava?	ò siri ákpụ.
No, she cooked meat.	ḿbà. ó siri ánụ.
Did he carry a mat?	ò buru úte.
Yes, he carried a mat.	ée. ó bùru úte.

What do you see?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ nà ahụ́.
I see an elephant.	á nà m ahụ́ enyí.
Are you cooking soup?	ị na eté ofé.
No, I'm cooking meat.	ḿbà. á nà m esí anụ́.
Are they eating?	hà na erí nrí.
Yes, they're eating cassava.	ée. há nà atá akpụ́.

Is he selling salt?	ọ̀ na eré nnú.
No, he's selling meat.	ḿbà. ọ́ nà eré anụ́.
Is he killing an animal?	ọ̀ na egbú anụ́.
Yes, he's killing a goat.	ée. ọ́ nà egbú ewú.
Is he carrying a mat?	ọ̀ na ebú uté.
Yes, he's carrying a mat.	ée. ọ́ nà ebú uté.

Drill 4. The next group of nouns are those you have learned with the tones step-step. In the second set of sentences below, these appear as same-step, exactly like the pattern in Drill 3. These two tone patterns become identical in this construction. In reality, same-step in the second part of this drill does not represent a change from step-step at all. These nouns have an initial step tone after low; if you are already on a step level, the initial vowel of the noun simply stays there.

Did you see a leopard?	ị̀ hụrụ ágụ́.
No, I saw a man.	ḿbà. á hụ̀rụ m ŋwóké.
Did they steal money?	hà zuru égó.
No, they stole kola nuts.	ḿbà. há zùru ọ́jị.
Did you see a farm?	ị̀ hụrụ úgbó.
No, I saw yam stakes.	ḿbà. á hụ̀rụ m ọ́bá.
Did you kill a bee?	ì gburu áŋụ́.
No, I killed a beetle.	ḿbà. é gbùru m ébé.
Did they eat kola nuts?	hà tara ọ́jị.
Yes, they ate kola nuts.	ée. há tàra ọ́jị.
Does he want kola nuts?	ọ̀ cọrọ ọ́jị.
No, he wants money.	ḿbà. ọ́ cọ̀rọ égó.

Do you see a leopard?	ị̀ na ahụ́ agụ́.
No, I see a man.	ḿbà. á nà m ahụ́ ŋwoké.
Is he stealing money?	ọ̀ na ezú egó.
Yes, he's stealing money.	ée. ọ́ nà ezú egó.
Do you see a farm?	ị̀ na ahụ́ ugbó.
No, I see yam stakes.	ḿbà. á nà m ahụ́ ọbá.

Is he killing a bee?	ọ̀ na egbú aŋụ́.
No, he's killing a beetle.	ḿbè. ọ́ nà egbú ebé.
Are they eating kola nuts?	hà na atá ọjị́.
Yes, they're eating kola nuts.	ée. há nà atá ọjị́.
Are you looking for kola nuts?	ị na acọ́ ọjị́.
No, I'm looking for money.	ḿbà. á nà m acọ́ egó.

Drill 5. The final group of nouns are those you have learned as step-low. Here again, there is no essential change in the new construction, though the initial step again turns out to be same if a step precedes.

What did she cook?	gị́nị́ kà ó siri.
She cooked fish.	ó siri ázụ̀.
She cooked corn.	ó siri ọ́kà.
What did you buy?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ zụ̀rụ.
I bought cloth.	á zụ̀rụ m ákwà.
I bought pepper.	á zụ̀rụ m ósè.
What did he do?	gị́nị́ kà ó mère.
He made (sewed) clothes.	ọ́ kwàra ákwà.
He planted corn.	ọ́ kụ̀rụ ọ́kà.
He went home.	ọ́ làra ụ́lọ̀.
Whom did he call?	ònyé kà ọ́ kpọ̀rọ.
He called his friend.	ọ́ kpọ̀rọ ényi.yá.
What are you cooking?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ nà esí.
I'm cooking fish.	á nà m esí azụ̀.
I'm cooking corn.	á nà m esí ọkà.
What are you buying?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ nà azụ́.
I'm buying a knife.	á nà m azụ́ mmà.
I'm buying pepper.	á nà m azụ́ osè.
What are you doing?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ nà emé.
I'm making clothes.	á nà m akwá akwà.

I'm planting corn.	á nà m akų́ ǫkà.
I'm going home.	á nà m alá ųlǫ̀.
Who is he calling?	ònyé kà ǫ́ nà akpǫ́.
He's calling a friend.	ǫ́ nà akpǫ́ enyi.

Notes:

Three verbs have been used in this lesson, all translated as 'eat'. They will be cited here in a form called the "infinitive", of which the second syllable is the verb stem itself. The verb /irí/ is used with objects that refer to major items of regular meal diet. The verb /įrá/ is used with objects that refer to soft or juicy foods that can be consumed without much chewing; in some contexts, 'lick' may be a legitimate translation. The verb /įtá/ is used with objects that refer to foods generally eaten as snacks; "munch on" might be a good colloquial translation in many instances.

The word /ǫ́bá/ has been translated as 'yam stakes'. There is no single English word or phrase that will express both the form and the function indicated by the Igbo word. Although it is often translated as 'yam barn', there is no structure with roof and walls involved, as the English word 'barn' suggests. The African 'yams' referred to are nothing like the small reddish or yellow tubers which we call by the same name; they are rather a large, white-meated root which may grow to two or more feet in length, and up to six inches in diameter. When boiled and mashed, they closely resemble mashed Irish potatoes; they are a little stiffer in texture and creamier in color. After these yams are harvested, they are stored and preserved by being tied in clusters on stakes. A group of such stakes, unroofed (since the yams need both air and rain) but fenced in for protection against animal or possibly human marauders, is known as /ǫ́bá/. The English phrase 'yam stakes' is merely an effort to suggest in English what the Igbo word refers to.

The new verbal construction introduced in this lesson may be labelled "present". In usage, it corresponds to both the English present ("I'm buying eggs, he's taking a bath, I see a leopard") and to the English expression for customary action ("He makes clothes, I sell meat, you tell lies"). The latter may be called "present" in our grammar books, but it has nothing to do with what is happening now, but rather with what happens ordinarily, at noon daily, or whenever one feels like it. Igbo does not make a distinction between these in the verbal construction itself.

Now take another look at an example of this construction:

á nà m azụ́ akwà.   I'm buying cloth.

Actually, the verb itself in this construction is /nà/. One evidence of this is that the pronominal combination /á ... m̀/ encloses only /nà/, and excludes that which has to do with buying. The verb /nà/ means something like 'be-with' or 'be-at'; you will find it later in expressions of location, and it is also used to join nouns like the English conjunction 'and' ('with, accompanying'). After this verb /nà/, the form /àzụ́/ is a type of noun; it is derived from a verb stem meaning 'buy', to be sure, but is nevertheless a noun. The entire Igbo construction can be reflected in English by something like 'I am-with a buying of cloth', or 'I am (occupied) at cloth-buying.' That /àzụ́/ is a kind of noun will later prove to be important to the description of certain tonal alternations, though not particularly those you have already met.

The tonal alternations included in this lesson can be pointed up in the following sentences, taking one noun from each of the tonal groups you have learned:

Past	Present	
ọ́ zụ̀rụ ite.	ọ́ nà azụ́ ìte.	
ó sìri akwá.	ọ́ nà esí ákwa.	(!)
ọ́ cọ̀rọ óce.	ọ́ nà acọ́ océ.	(!)
ó zùru égó.	ọ́ nà ezú egó.	
ó rère ákwà.	ọ́ nà eré akwà.	

First, don't be confused by differences in writing that do not actually represent alternations in tone. In the first two tonal types (/ìte, àkwá/), the initial low tone is not marked if a low tone precedes, as in the past; this is simply a rule of the writing system that you have known from the beginning. In the last three tonal types (/óce, égó, ákwà/), the initial tone is always same after a non-low; of course, this can only be a step, and is so written, at the beginning of a phrase or after a low tone, as in the past.

The actual tonal alternations which must be described appear in the second and third pairs of sentences above, as indicated by exclamation marks. Tonal alternations occur in certain types of phrases; limitations and exceptions will be defined as you meet them. For the time being, the two following statements will suffice for the alternations illustrated above:

(1) Forms with the tones low-step (the type /àkwá/) have the alternant tones step-same (/ákwa/) when a non-low tone precedes. Thus the alternation between /àkwá/ and /ákwa/, in the

appropriate type of phrase, depends solely on the preceding *tone*.

(2) Forms with the tones step-same (the type /óce/) have alternants with a final step, but under somewhat different conditions. The tones same-step (/ócé/, as in the third sentence on the right above) likewise occur, in the appropriate type of phrase, whenever a non-low tone precedes. In addition, however, the same alternation (but in the form step-step, /ócé/) appears after a *noun* ending with *low* tone; there has been no example of this as yet, but it constitutes an important addition to the conditions for the alternation described in (1) above.

These and other tonal alternations do, of course, give you more to remember about the tones of Igbo words. The patterns of alternation are limited, however, and there are ways of mastering them so that they will eventually become automatic. This is one respect, incidentally, in which there is very little difference among major dialects of Igbo. The following suggestions for drill will help you to "internalize" these patterns:

a. Take the sample sentences on page 23, or others like them, and memorize them absolutely cold, vertically and horizontally, so that you can repeat them accurately in rapid succession; make sure that the tonal identities and contrasts are unmistakable.

b. Use as a "stimulus" any simple sentence in the past: pronoun, verb, and object. As a response, give the corresponding present form. This can be done even if you do not know the meaning of the stimulus sentence.

c. Have questions asked in the past, and respond with an affirmative answer. Then have another student ask the corresponding question in the present, and still another give the affirmative answer to that.

(Drilling on questions with "What?" and questions with contradicting answers is useful only if the vocabulary itself has been quite thoroughly mastered.)

Lesson 5.

As longer and more varied sentences are introduced, some new details of grammar will naturally appear. But such material will also give you an opportunity to develop fluency and timing, which are essential to real competence in a new language. At the same time, of course, there must be no sacrifice of accuracy. If necessary, drill on portions of sentences separately, and then work up to the longer combinations.

Drill 1. This drill introduces the forms /ànyį/ 'we' and /únù/ 'you (when addressing more than one person)'. In many respects, these and /há/ 'they' function as nouns in Igbo, rather than like the singular pronouns. They do not follow the rules for vowel harmony, but have invariable vowels. They do, however, take low tone in questions.

Did they buy food?	hà zųrų ńri.
Yes, they bought corn and meat.	ée. há zų̀rų ǫkà na ánų.
Did you buy food?	ùnu zųrų ńri.
No, we bought cups and plates.	ḿbà. ànyį zų̀rų ikó nà éfere.
Do we have salt?	ànyį ŋwere ńnu.
Yes, we have salt and pepper.	ée. ànyį́ ŋwère ńnu nà ósè.
Do we have eggs?	ànyį ŋwere akwá.
Yes, you bought eggs yesterday.	ée. únù zųrų akwá ecí.
Did they cook food?	hà siri ńri.
Yes, they cooked yams and meat.	ée. há siri jí nà ánų.
Are you selling cloth?	ùnu na eré akwà.
No, we're selling yams and cassava.	ḿbà. ànyį nà eré jí nà ákpų.
Are they eating bread?	hà na atá àcįca.
Yes, they're eating bread and eggs.	ée. há nà atá àcįca na akwá.
What are we eating?	gį́nį́ kà anyį́ nà erí.
You're eating yams and fish.	únù na erí jí nà ázų̀.
Do they sell plates?	hà na eré eféré.
Yes, they sell plates and spoons.	ée. há nà eré eféré nà ŋɛajį.

Are you looking for meat?	ùnu na acọ́ anụ́.
Yes, we're looking for meat and beans.	ée. ànyị́ nà acọ́ anụ́ nà agwa.

Drill 2. Several new details are included in this drill. The singular possessive pronouns and two demonstrative phrases will give little trouble. In questions, a subject pronoun with low tone must be used after a noun or noun-phrase subject; but in statements, the subject pronoun is omitted. A contrasting subject is introduced by /ọ́ bụ̀/; ~~the verb later in the sentence then has step tone, not low as you might expect.~~ The form /n'/ introducing expressions of location is a contraction of /nà/; the full form is rarely heard, and does not retain its own tone.

Is this your pot?	ŋ̀ké à ọ bụ ite gị́.
No, that's her pot.	ḿbà. ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ bụ ite yá.
My pot is in the house.	íte ḿ dị n'íme ụlọ̀.
Is his cup in the house?	íkó yá ọ̀ dị n'íme ụlọ̀.
No, his cup is here.	ḿbà. íkó yá dị n'ébe à.
It's my cup that's in the house.	ọ́ bụ̀ ikó ḿ dị̀ n'ime ụlọ̀.
Is that my load?	ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ ọ bụ íbu ḿ.
No, this is his load.	ḿbà. ŋ̀ké à bụ íbu yá.
Your load is in town.	íbu gị́ dị n'íme òbodo.
Is my money over there?	égó m ọ̀ dị n'ébe ahụ̀.
No, this is his money.	ḿbà. ŋ̀ké à bụ égó ya.
Your money is in the pot.	égó gị́ dị n'íme íte.
Is my hoe in the house?	ọ́gụ̀ ḿ ọ̀ dị n'íme ụlọ̀.
No, your hoe is over there.	ḿbà. ọ́gụ̀ gị́ dị n'ébe ahụ̀.
It's his hoe that's in the house.	ọ́ bụ̀ ọ́gụ̀ yá dị̀ n'ime ụlọ̀.

Now you will be asked the following questions; each should be answered with a contradiction and a correction, following the patterns illustrated above:

ŋ̀ké à ọ bụ akpa gị́.
àkwá yá ọ̀ dị n'íme ụlọ̀.
ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ ọ bụ óce ḿ.
ọ́bá gị ọ̀ dị n'ébe ahụ̀.
ḿmá ḿ ọ̀ dị n'íme ụlọ̀.

Drill 3. A contrasting object, like the contrasting subject illustrated in the preceding drill, is introduced by /ọ́ bụ̀/. After the object, however, /kà/ must be used to introduce the subject and verb. In this construction, the pronoun 'I' is simply /ḿ/ before the verb, rather than the "split" form /á ... m̀/. The verb itself has low tone as in ordinary statements.

Did he buy your cow?	ọ̀ zụrụ éhi gị́.
No, it was my goat that he bought.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ éwu ḿ kà ọ́ zụ̀rụ.
Is it my basket that you have?	ọ̀ bụ ŋkata ḿ kà í jí.
No, your basket is over there.	ḿbà. ŋ̀kata gị́ dị́ n'ébe ahụ̀.
Was it his food that you ate?	ọ̀ bụ ńri yá kà í rìri.
No, it was my food that I ate.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ńri ḿ kà ḿ rìri.
Was it my cup that you washed?	ọ̀ bụ ikó ḿ kà ị́ sàra.
Yes, it was your cup that I washed.	ée. ọ́ bụ̀ ikó gị́ kà ḿ sàra.
Did you hide my money?	ì zoro égó m.
No, it was my money that I hid.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ égó m kà ḿ zòro.
Is he selling his goat?	ọ̀ na eré ewú ya.
No, it's his cow that he's selling.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ éhi yá kà ọ́ nà eré.
Are you looking for your knife?	ị̀ na acọ́ mmà gị́.
No, my knife is in the house.	ḿbà. ḿmà ḿ dị́ n'íme ụlọ̀.
Are you washing his clothes?	ị̀ na asá akwà yá.
No, it's your clothes I'm washing.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ákwà gị́ kà ḿ nà asá.
Are you looking for your bag?	ị̀ na acọ́ àkpa gị́.
No, it's my money I'm looking for.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ égó m kà ḿ nà acọ́.
Is he buying your knife?	ọ̀ na azụ́ mmà gị́.
No, it's my hoe that he's buying.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ọ́gụ̀ ḿ kà ọ́ nà azụ́.

Drill 4. The singular object pronouns are added now; they should not be difficult, because they are identical in form with the possessive pronouns. In fact, after the verbal noun in the present construction, it makes no difference whether the pronoun is called "object" or "possessive". Note that the expressions introduced by /n'/ refer only to location at a place; after a verb meaning 'go', expressions referring to place are used by themselves.

A.	Where did Ngbankwo go?	A.	ébe óle kà Ŋgbáŋkwọ gàra.
B.	She went to town.	B.	ọ́ gàra obodo.
A.	Did you see her there?	A.	ị hụrụ yá n'ebe ahụ̀.
B.	No, I saw her at her house.	B.	ḿbà. á hụ̀rụ m yá n'ụlọ̀ yá.

A.	Did Nwaoye go to the market?	A.	Ŋ̀wáoyè ọ gara áhya.
B.	No, he's in my house.	B.	ḿbà. ọ́ nọ̀ n'íme ụlọ̀ ḿ.
	He left his money here.		ọ́ hàra égó ya n'ebe à.
	He's looking for it.		ọ́ nà acọ́ yá.

A.	Where are you going?	A.	ébe óle kà ị́ nà agá.
B.	I'm going to the market.	B.	á nà m agá ahyá.
	I want cassava and eggs.		á cọ̀rọ m ákpụ nà akwá.
	Please give me money.		bíkó, nyé ḿ egó.

A.	I saw you in the market.	A.	á hụ̀rụ m gị́ n'ahya.
	Did you buy food?		ị zụtara ńri.
B.	No, I bought cloth.	B.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ákwà ka ḿ zụ̀tara.
A.	Where is it?	A.	ébe óle kà ọ́ dị.
B.	It's inside the house.	B.	ọ́ dị n'íme ụlọ̀.

A.	Did you see me in town?	A.	ị hụrụ ḿ n'ọ̀bodo.
B.	Yes. Did you go to market?	B.	ée. ị gara áhya.
A.	Yes. I bought meat.	A.	ée. á zụ̀tara m ánụ.
	I'm cooking it here.		á nà m esí yá n'ebe à.

Drill 5. An expression for future action is added in this drill. The pattern is exactly like that for present action, except that the verbal part of the construction is /gà/ instead of /nà/. You may also notice -- as you probably have in preceding drills -- a few other unexpected items. These will be discussed in the Notes at the end of the lesson; meanwhile, concentrate on the particular point been stressed in each drill.

A.	Where are you going?	A.	ébe óle kà ị́ nà agá.
B.	I'm going to town.	B.	á nà m agá ọ̀bodo.
A.	Are you going to buy something?	A.	ị ga azụ́ta ihé.
B.	Yes, I'm going to buy bread.	B.	ée. á gà m azụ́ta àcịca.

A.	Do you have money?	A.	ì ŋwere égó.
B.	My father will give me money.	B.	ńnà ḿ gà enyé ḿ egó.
A.	Is your father at your house?	A.	ńnà gị̀ ọ̀ nọ̀ n'ụ́lọ̀ gị̀.
B.	Yes, my father and my mother are here.	B.	ée. ńnà ḿ nà nné ḿ nọ̀ n'ébe à.
	They're going to eat here.		há gà erí nrí n'ebe à.

A.	What are you going to do?	A.	gị̀nị̀ kà ị̀ gà emé.
B.	I'm going to buy plantains.	B.	á gà m azụ́ta ọ̀gede.
A.	Are you going to cook them here?	A.	ị̀ ga esí há n'ebe à.
B.	No, I'm going to cook them at my house.	B.	ḿbà. á gà m esí há n'ụlọ̀ ḿ.

A.	Where is your father?	A.	ébe óle kà ńnà gị̀ nọ̀.
B.	He's in the house.	B.	ọ́ nọ̀ n'íme ụlọ̀.
A.	I'll wait for him here.	A.	á gà m ecé yá n'ebe à.
B.	Please come in.	B.	bíkó, bàtá.
A.	Thank you.	A.	ǹdéèwó.

A.	Is my mother here?	A.	ǹné ḿ ọ̀ nọ n'ébe à.
B.	No, she's outside.	B.	ḿbà. ọ́ nọ̀ n'ezí.
	I'll call her.		á gà m akpọ́ yá.

A.	Are you going to town?	A.	ị̀ na agá òbodo.
B.	Yes.	B.	ée.
A.	Good. I'll look for you at the market.	A.	ọ́ dị̀ ḿmá. á gà m acọ́ gị̀ n'ahya.

Notes:

1. The singular possessive or object pronouns undergo one tonal alternation, but it is a simple one. After two step tones without an intervening low, these pronouns have same tone; elsewhere, their tone is step. Here is a simple example of each combination:

ìte ḿ	'my pot'	óce ḿ	'my chair'
ìkó ḿ	'my cup'	ḿmà ḿ	'my knife'

but: égó m 'my money'

2. The phrases translated as 'here' and 'there' are composed of a noun plus a demonstrative:

óbe ahụ̀ 'that place, there', óbe à 'this place, here'

The same demonstratives are used after a noun meaning 'thing' to express 'this' and 'that'; the tonal difference in the noun represents a type of tonal alternation that will be treated later, but these phrases can be memorized by themselves:

ọ̀ke áhụ̀ 'that (thing)'	ọ̀ké à 'this (thing)'

The same demonstratives can also be used after other nouns; an example that does not involve a tonal alternation is:

ówu ahụ̀ 'that goat'	ówu à 'this goat'

3. The contraction /n'/, from /nà/, is used after verbs indicating location, and after expressions of action to indicate the place at which the action is performed; but it is not used after verbs of motion when the following place expression refers to the destination. Compare the following:

ọ́ dị̀ n'ébe à.	It is here.
ọ́ nọ̀ n'ébe à.	He (or She) is here.
ó siri ńri n'ebe à.	She cooked here.
but ọ́ gàra ébe ahụ̀.	He went there.

The form /n'/ in expressions of location is undoubtedly related to the verbal /nà/ in the present construction, and to the form /nà/ which connects nouns and is translated as 'and'. In all cases, the underlying idea is "association" -- with another noun, with an action expressed by a verbal noun, or with a place in the case of location. There can be no confusion, since the differences are clearly expressed by what follows. However, it is most important to note that /nà/ is not the equivalent of English 'and' under all circumstances; it cannot be used in Igbo to join two verbs.

4. The construction for a contrasting subject, introduced in Drill 2 of this lesson, is further illustrated in the following:

ọ́ bụ̀ anyị́ gàra òbodo.	It is we who went to town.
ọ́ bụ̀ anyị́ nọ̀ n'ebe à.	It is we who are here.
ọ́ bụ̀ anyị́ nà aga òbodo.	It is we who are going to town.
ọ́ bụ̀ anyị́ gà aga òbodo.	It is we who will go to town.

~~The verbal forms with step tone in the above are examples of a "relative" construction; the verbal noun in this construction has the tones same-same. Compare the corresponding non-relative or "absolute" constructions:~~

~~ànyị gàra obodo.~~	~~We went to town.~~
~~ànyị nọ̀ n'ébe à.~~	~~We are here.~~
~~ànyị nà agá òbodo.~~	~~We are going to town.~~
~~ànyị gà agá òbodo.~~	~~We will go to town.~~

~~Except in the past, the contrastive construction in some dialects may use the same tone as the absolute; it is simply /ọ́ bụ̀/ followed by the absolute constructions above.~~

5. The construction for a contrasting object, introduced in Drill 3 of this lesson, differs in that /kà/ is used after the contrasted word or phrase; in the rest of the sentence, the pronoun 'I' is /ḿ/ alone. Examples of this construction are:

ọ́ bụ̀ ákwà yá kà ḿ sàra.	It was his clothes that I washed.
ọ́ bụ̀ égó m kà í ji.	It's my money that you have.
ọ́ bụ̀ anyị kà há hụ̀rụ.	It was us that they saw.

A similar contrastive construction, but without /ọ́ bụ̀/ in the first two examples, and with /ọ́ bụ̀/ optional in the third, is illustrated in the following sentences with question words:

kèdú kà ị dị.	How are you?
ébe óle kà há nọ̀.	Where are they?
(ọ̀ bụ) gịnị kà ị nà emé.	What are you doing?

6. You have now had a number of very common verbal expressions that do not come under the definitions of what you know as "past" or "present" or "future". They have probably given you little trouble, but they are pointed out here as examples of a construction that you will also meet with some other verbs. For example:

ọ́ bụ̀ (ite)	it is (a pot)
ọ́ dị (n'ébe à)	it is (here)
ọ́ nọ̀ (n'ébe à)	he (or she) is (here)
ó ji (égó)	he has (money)
ó sí (Ọnịca)	he is from (Onitsha)
ọ́ nà (agá)	he is (going)
ọ́ gà (agá)	he is on the point of (going)

Although two of these are used only as parts of fuller verbal constructions, they parallel the other examples. In each case, what is significant about the construction is the use of the verb stem, with no prefix or suffix, with low tone. The construction illustrated by all of these may be labelled "stative". The stative expresses a situation. The emphasis is not on time, nor on action or motion, but rather on a simple description of the status quo. Important contrasts between the stative and other constructions will turn up later.

7. Three Igbo verbs have, in one way or another, been translated by the English verb "be". They are quite different in Igbo, however. First, the verb /ị́dị́/ (here cited in the "infinitive" form) means "be located"; it is used only for inanimate subjects. For an animate subject (person or animal), the verb /ị́nọ́/ is used instead, though some dialects use /ị́dị́/ in all cases. By contrast with both of these, /ị́bụ́/ is a verb meaning 'be described as' or 'be identified as'. Keep the following contrasts clearly in mind:

ọ́ dị n'ébe à.	It is here.
ọ́ nọ̀ n'ébe à.	He (or She, or It of an animal) is here.
ọ́ bụ̀ ite.	It is a pot.

The verb /ị́dị́/ is also used in quite a different way in expressions like the following:

kèdú kà ọ́ dị.	How is it?
ọ́ dị ḿmá.	It's fine.
kèdú kà ị́ dị.	How are you?
á dị m ḿmá.	I'm fine.

8. New in this lesson has been the verb at the end of the following sentence:

ọ̀ bụ ŋkata ḿ kà í jì.	Is it my basket that you have?

The infinitive form of the verb in question is /íjì/; the stem has low tone. Another verb commonly translated as 'have' is /íŋwé/. For example, compare the following:

é ŋwère m ŋkata.	I have a basket.

/íjì/, used in the stative construction, refers to immediate possession -- what one has in his hand or at the moment. In contrast with this, /íŋwé/ basically means 'get, receive'; used in the past, it refers to what one has already received and therefore possesses at present. It refers to a more general, not immediate or visible, possession. Compare the following:

é jì m égó.	I have money (in hand).
é ŋwère m égó.	I have money (somewhere).
á gà m eŋwé egó.	I will receive money.

9. In previous lessons, you have had the verb /ịzụ́/ translated as 'buy'. Now you suddenly find forms with the same translation, but related to an infinitive form /ịzụ́ta/. There is a subtle difference in meaning. /ịzụ́/ by itself means 'purchase', without any indication of what is done with the purchased goods after the transaction. The longer form /ịzụ́ta/ is the same stem with the addition of a kind of suffix that will be called a "verbal extension". This particular extension refers to performing an action for oneself, or performing an action and coming. Thus /ịzụ́ta/ means 'buy for oneself' or 'buy and bring'. You will meet this extension in other combinations, and you will also meet other extensions with other specialized meanings added to the basic meaning of the stem. You can now see the situational reason for /ịzụ́/ having been used in the more abstract sentences of earlier lessons, but meeting /ịzụ́ta/ in the practical conversational situations used in this lesson. There are, of course, many cases in which either form would be permissible.

10. By way of an interrogative expression indicating location, you have met the expression /ébe óle/ 'where?', or more literally 'which place?'. You may hear the following alternate expressions, depending on dialect:

	ébe óle kà ọ́ nà agá.	Where is he going?
or	èbéé kà ọ́ nà agá.	(ditto)

In areas where /èbéé/ is used, you may hear the following further variations, using a different verb meaning 'go':

	èbéé kà í jè kọ.	Where are you going?
or	ì je kọ ebéé.	(ditto)

In the latter expressions, a verb /íjé/ 'go' is used (in the stative) instead of the verb /ịgá/ which is normally used in these lessons. The added form /kọ̀/ is confined to a few expressions of this sort.

Lesson 6.

This lesson introduces another group of tonal alternations. These, rather than being conditioned by something which precedes, are conditioned by something which follows. Master these alternations one at a time, as spoken patterns rather than as grammatical statements. The statements are given simply to let you know what you are going to hear, and to assure you that it is not a mistake.

Drill 1. Verbs with low stem tone can be distinguished from verbs with step stem tone in the verbal noun, which is used in the present and future constructions. The verbal noun of a verb with low stem tone has the basic tones step-low. Before a noun which independently begins with low, a step-low noun has an alternant with final step. If the following noun is independently low-step, it takes the alternant form step-same after a non-low (Lesson 4, pp. 23-24). Trace the alternations in the following examples:

He took a pot.	ó wère ite.
What is he taking?	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ nà ówè.
He's taking a pot.	ọ́ nà ówé ite.
She swept the compound.	ọ́ zàra ezí.
What is she sweeping?	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ nà ázà.
She's sweeping the compound.	ọ́ nà ázá ézi.
She cut up the meat.	ó bère ányụ.
What is she cutting up?	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ nà óbè.
She's cutting up meat.	ọ́ nà óbè ányụ́.
He took money.	ọ́ wère égó.
What is he taking?	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ nà ówè.
He's taking money.	ọ́ nà ówè égó.
He wove cloth.	ọ́ kpàra ákwà.
What is he weaving?	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ nà ákpà.
He's weaving cloth.	ọ́ nà ákpà ákwà.

Drill 2. In addition to verbal nouns from verbs with low stem tone, you are familiar with many other nouns which independently have the tones step-low. These undergo the same alternation: the

final low becomes step before a noun which independently begins with low. The forms /ànyị́/ and /únù/, though translated by English pronouns, function as nouns in Igbo in phrases of this type. In fact, /únù/ in some of the following sentences has the alternant /únú/ under circumstances similar to, but more extensive than, the usual alternation of step-low to step-step.

Did you wash your clothes?	ùnu sara ákwà únù.
Yes, we washed our clothes.	ée. ànyị́ sàra ákwá ányị.
Where did you buy your clothes?	ébe óle kà únú zụ̀rụ ákwà únù.
We bought our clothes in Onitsha.	ànyị́ zụ̀rụ ákwá ányị n'Ọ̀nịca.
Where are your knives?	ébe óle kà ḿmà únú dị̀.
Our knives are in our house.	ḿmá ányị dị̀ n'íme ụlọ́ ányị.
What's your monkey's name?	gị́nị́ kà áhá èŋwe gị́ bụ̀.
His name is Joe.	áhà yá bụ̀ "joú".
What is that?	gị́nị́ bụ̀ ŋke áhụ̀.
That's my monkey's house.	ọ́ bụ̀ ụ́lọ́ èŋwe ḿ.
Did you wash the bottom of that cup?	ị̀ sara íké íko ahụ̀.
Yes, I washed the bottom of it.	ée. á sàra m íkè yá.
Did you wash the bottom of that pot?	ị̀ sara íké ìte áhụ̀.
Yes, I washed the bottom of it.	ée. á sàra m íkè yá.
Will you give them your house?	ùnu ga enyé há ụlọ̀ únù.
Yes, we'll give them our house.	ée. ànyị́ gà enyé há ụlọ́ ányị.
Are your children in town?	ụ́mụ̀ únù ha nọ n'obodo.
No, our children are at our house.	ḿbà. ụ́mụ́ ányị nọ̀ n'ụ́lọ́ ányị.

Drill 3. Another tonal alternation can be stated in identical terms for another tonal type of noun: before a noun which independently begins with low, a low-low noun has an alternant with final step. A wide variety of examples of this alternation would involve rather unusual vocabulary which is of no immediate practical value. A common occurrence of the pattern, however, is found in a noun which is independently low-low, followed by the possessive /ànyị́/. Another is a low-low noun followed by the demonstrative /à/. In fact, the phrase /ŋ̀ké à/ 'this (thing)' is an example of just this alternation; compare /ŋ̀ke áhụ̀/. Other examples are as follows:

Where did he go?	óbe óle kà ọ́ gàra.
He went to our town.	ọ́ gàra obodó ányị.
Is that your rope?	ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ ọ bụ ụdọ únù.
Yes, that's our rope.	ée. ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ bụ ụdọ́ ányị.
Did she wash this pot?	ọ̀ sara ité à.
Yes, she washed the pot and the cup.	ée. ọ́ sàra ite na ikó.
Is there corn in this bag?	ọ́kà ọ dị n'íme àkpá à.
No, there's rice in it.	ḿbà. òsíkapa dị n'íme yá.
Where did you buy this basket?	ébe óle kà ị́ zụ̀rụ ŋkatá à.
I bought it in town.	á zụ̀rụ m yá n'òbodo.
Is this your town?	ŋ̀ké à ọ bụ obodo únù.
No, our town is Onitsha.	ḿbà. òbodó ányị bụ̀ Ọnịca.
Is that their bed?	ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ ọ bụ akwa há.
No, that's our bed.	ḿbà. ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ bụ akwá ányị.

Drill 4. The third alternation conditioned by what follows is somewhat different; it will probably also be easier to remember. In nouns, step-step has the alternant step-same before a noun with any tone. This means that nouns with the tones step-step become identical with nouns with the tones step-same before another noun. Remember that these two also merge after a non-low tone or a noun ending with low tone; both are step-step; see Lesson 4, p. 24. The two alternations described earlier in this lesson are restricted to occurrences before nouns which independently begin with low tone; the alternation we are now concerned with occurs before all nouns, including those which begin with a non-low tone.

Is this your money?	ŋ̀ké à ọ bụ égó gị.
No, it's your (pl.) money.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ égo unù.
Is that his farm?	ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ ọ bụ úgbó ya.
No, that's our farm.	ḿbà. ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ bụ úgbo ányị.
Did he steal (a theft)?	ò zuru órí.
Yes, he stole (a theft of) money.	ée. ó zùru óri egó.
Is that your father's yam stakes?	ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ ọ bụ ọ́ba nnà gị́.
No, it's my yam stakes.	ḿbà. ọ́ bụ̀ ọ́bá m.

Is this Ngbaoye's stirring spoon?	ŋ̀ké à ọ bụ éku ŋ́gbaoyè.
Yes, it's her stirring spoon.	ée. ọ́ bụ̀ ékú ya.
Did you reach the top of the hill?	ì ruru élu ugwú.
Yes, I reached the top of it.	ée. [illegible]rùru m élú ya.

It is important to note right here that, in this particular combination, the possessive /há/ 'their' behaves like the singular possessive pronouns, not like the plural possessive nouns /ànyị̀/ and /únù/. In several other circumstances which you will meet, /há/ patterns with /ànyị̀/ and /únù/, in contrast with the singular pronoun forms. Note the restrictions in the occurrence of the alternation step-step to step-same in the following phrases:

égó m	'my money'	égo ányị̀	'our money'
égó gị̀	'your (s.) money'	égo unù	'your (pl.) money'
égó ya	'his money'	égo ahụ̀	'that money'
égó ha	'their money'	égo à	'this money'
ọ́nụ̀ ya	'its price'	ọ́nụ jí	'price of yams'

Drill 5. By way of reviewing all of the tonal alternations that have been introduced up to this point, a number of model sentences are given below. After each one, several substitutions are suggested. Make the substitutions indicated, with whatever tonal alternations are necessary.

(1) á gà m azụ́ta ìte.
(ìkó)
(óce)
(ọ́jị̀)
(ọ́kà)
(yá)

(2) ọ́ nà ówè yá.
(àkpa)
(àkwá)
(ányụ)
(égó)
(ḿmà)

(3) ŋ̀ké à bụ ụ́lọ̀ ḿ.
(únù)
(ànyị̀)
(Òkóyè)

(4) ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ bụ obodo yá.
(ànyị̀)
(ńnà ḿ)
(ǹné ḿ)

(5) ọ́ bụ̀ égó gị̀.
(ànyị̀)
(únù)
(há)

Notes:

A summary of the tonal alternations you have met so far is given in a series of statements below. The purpose of statements such as these is simply to give you a frame of reference to help you learn the spoken patterns, rather than leaving you to remember what may seem to be isolated examples of capricious irregularities. Be sure to associate each statement with key examples such as those given, and be prepared for the restrictions and the extensions of these patterns in other contexts later on.

1. Alternations conditioned by what *follows*. Examples are:

(1) ọ́ nà ówè ógó. *but:* ọ́ nà ówé íte.
(2) òbodo *but:* òbodó Ìgbo
(3) ógó *but:* ógo unù

1.1. These alternations occur only *in nouns* -- not, for example, in verb forms such as /hụ̀rụ/.

1.2. These alternations occur only *before nouns* -- not, for example, before numerals, as you will learn in the next lesson, nor before verbs. The special alternations of /únù/ to /únú/ are of a quite different type; for the time being, note them one by one.

1.3. The first two of these alternations, as illustrated above, occur only before nouns which independently begin with low tone. In addition to the above, be sure to memorize the following, in which /ànyị/ has the alternation /ányị/ covered by the statements in 2 below:

(1) ụ́lọ̀ *but:* ụ́lọ́ ányị
(2) òbodo *but:* òbodó ányị

1.4. The third of these alternations occurs before nouns with any initial tone; review the illustrations on page 37.

2. Alternations conditioned by what *precedes*. Examples are:

(1) ọ́ cọ̀rọ ikó. *but:* ọ́ nà acọ́ íko.
ọ́ nà ówé íko. (see 1.3 above)

(2) ọ́ cọ̀rọ ánụ. *but:* ọ́ nà acọ́ anụ́.
ọ́ nà ówè ánụ́.

2.1. These alternations occur in more than one type of form -- not only in nouns, which have been the ordinary examples, but at least in numerals as well, as you will learn in the next lesson.

2.2. These alternations occur in some types of phrases, but not in all. The examples you have had use a noun before the word which displays the alternation, but this is not necessary. Some verb forms could occur in the same position. However, these alternations do not occur after the past, nor -- as you will learn later -- after an infinitive or a negative.

2.3. The first of these alternations occurs only after a step tone; if the preceding word independently ends in low tone, it must be a noun, and then its final tone has already changed to step according to the rule in 1.3 above.

2.4. The second of these alternations also occurs after nouns which end with low; the preceding noun does not alter.

The tonal alternations described above are the commonest and most important alternations in Igbo. Alternations of at least two other types occur. One is characteristic of a few verbal constructions; another serves to mark relative clauses. In fact, the low tone of pronouns in questions is still another, though limited, type of tonal alternation. Don't start worrying that you will get all of these confused. Since they have entirely different functions, each can be learned in its own context. The one thing that is absolutely essential, now and later, is to be aware of what is going on and to master the patterns; and the only way to start is by learning individual examples. The fact that tones change does not mean that tone is unimportant; on the contrary, the alternations are rigidly controlled by statable rules, and must be a part of your accurate control.

As a result of this set of tonal alternations, certain mergers of tonal types are found. If you first hear a new word in an environment where its basic tone is ambiguous, you must be aware that you cannot use it in other contexts until you know more about it. For example, in this lesson you met the phrase /élu ugwú/ 'top of the hill' -- the town name /Ènugwú/ is a dialectal alternant of this phrase. Another use of the first word, in /élú yá/, showed that the word for 'top' has the basic tones step-step, not step-same. But you have heard nothing to tell you whether the word for 'hill' is step-same (/úgwu/, the actual basic form) or step-step; after a non-low tone, either step-same or step-step has a final step. Or suppose you were to hear the phrase /ụ̀kpá ányị/ 'our basket' (a special type of basket is referred to); you should be aware that you cannot use the noun independently, or with 'my' or 'his', until you find out whether its independent tone is low-step or low-low; this is the condition -- before a noun which independently begins with low -- under which low-low has the alternant low-step, and is indistinguishable from a basic low-step. Actually, the word in question is /ụ̀kpá/, but you would have to hear it by itself or in a phrase like /ụ̀kpá ḿ/ to be sure.

The following tonal mergers take place; the contrasting tones are on the left, the merged tones on the right:

ó ŋwère égó	ọ́ nà acọ́ egó
ó ŋwère ányụ	ọ́ nà acọ́ anụ́
égó ya	égo unù
ányụ yá	ányụ unù
ịte yá	ịté ányị
ịkó yá	ịkó ányị

A comment on the psychology of language learning may be helpful. On the day you first learn something in any new language, it doesn't sink in very deeply. Speaking a language means acquiring habits, and habits aren't formed in a moment or in a day. The habits will not come without any effort at all, but it is also true that no amount of effort can establish them instantly. If you keep at it, these alternations will become second nature in about a week. Don't expect to have them at your tongue-tip much sooner.

Lesson 7.

This lesson introduces the number words from one through twenty. The reason such common and useful words have not been used before is that nouns with numerals involve some of the tonal alternations you have learned in other phrases, but not all of them. Now that you have worked with the widest variety of tonal alternations, it will be easier to handle the more restricted alternations involving numerals.

Drill 1. Even in such a seemingly simple matter as counting, there are dialect differences in Igbo. For most of the numerals, there is not enough variation to confuse you under any circumstances. For "one", however, a form from the Onitsha area, but often heard elsewhere, is listed in parentheses below. In the case of "nine", two quite different forms are both used in fairly large areas, and are listed as alternants. Use whichever one you hear more commonly; if you hear both of them frequently, it won't be hard to learn to use both. Learn the forms through ten by repeating each one individually, then in groups of three or four, and finally the entire series. Don't worry about counting rapidly above ten. Be sure not to let the counting sound like reciting a list in English; the falling tones in "six" and "seven" must go all the way to low, and "ten" at the end of the series ends with a step tone -- which for English would give the impression that you are going to continue.

one	ótù (òfú)	eleven	ìrí nà ótù
two	àbụ́a	twelve	ìrí nà abụ́a
three	àtọ́	thirteen	ìrí nà atọ́
four	ànọ́	fourteen	ìrí nà anọ́
five	ìsé	fifteen	ìrí nà isé
six	ìsí	sixteen	ìrí nà isí
seven	àsâ	seventeen	ìrí nà asâ
eight	àsátọ́	eighteen	ìrí nà asátọ́
nine	ìtenáánị / ìtéghete	nineteen	ìrí nà itenáánị
ten	ìrí	twenty	ọ́gụ (Onitsha óru)

Drill 2. The words for "one" and "twenty" in the above list differ in usage from all the others. They are nouns: /ótù/ really means something like "a unit", and /ọ́gụ/ is a noun in somewhat the same way that "score" is a noun in English. These two numerical nouns are used before another noun; all of the others, which are

numerals and not nouns, are used after a noun. As nouns, /ótù/ and /ọ́gụ/ undergo precisely the tonal alternations you would expect; the following noun also undergoes whatever alternation may be appropriate. Thus the following sentences merely illustrate some of the very alternations that you have been learning.

He bought one knife.	ọ́ zụ̀tara ótù ḿmà.
He gave me one penny.	ó nyère ḿ otù kọ́pọ̀.
They have twenty fish.	há ŋwère ọ́gụ azụ̀.
There are twenty houses in this town.	ọ́gụ ụlọ̀ dị n'íme òbodó à.

We sold one chair.	ànyị rère ótù ócé.
He has one goat.	ó ŋwère ótù éwú.
That man owns twenty cows.	ŋwóke ahụ̀ ŋwere ọ́gụ ehí.
There are twenty chairs in the schoolhouse.	ọ́gụ océ dị n'íme ụlọ̀ ákwụ́kwọ.
I saw one leopard in the bush.	á hụ̀rụ m ótù ágụ̀ n'ọhya.
I will give you one shilling.	á gà m enyé gị otù égó.
They paid me twenty shillings for it.	há kwụ̀rụ ḿ ọgụ egó màka yá.
He bought twenty kola nuts.	ọ́ zụ̀rụ ọ́gụ ọjị.

I bought one basket in the market.	á zụ̀rụ m ótú ŋ̀kata n'áhya.
There's one bed in that house.	ótú àkwa dị n'íme ụlọ̀ áhụ̀.
We saw twenty pots in the market.	ànyị hụ̀rụ ọ́gụ íte n'áhya.
They sold twenty baskets today.	há rère ọ́gụ ŋ̀kata táà.

He bought one cup in the market.	ọ́ zụ̀rụ ótú íko n'ahya.
I eat one egg every morning.	á nà m erí otú ákwa kwà ụtụ́tụ̀.
There are twenty cups in my house.	ọ́gụ íko dị n'íme ụlọ̀ ḿ.
They gave us twenty eggs.	há nyère anyị ọgụ ákwa.

Drill 3. In many dialects, the numeral "two" has a special form after nouns, which we will use. It is /náàbụ/; like other forms with the tones step-low, this is invariable after a noun. The remaining numerals all begin with low in counting; after nouns, they have the tonal alternants you have learned to expect after a non-low tone. However, nouns with final low tone retain their basic tones before numerals; they do not have the alternants that you have learned to use before nouns with initial low. Only one alternation occurs in nouns before numerals: step-step has the alternant step same. Check each alternation in the following:

They killed two cows in town.	há gbùru éhi naàbụ n'obodo.
There are three goats in the compound.	éwu átọ dị n'íme ézi.
There are four chairs in our house.	óce ánọ dị n'íme ụlọ́ ányị.
They brought six loads today.	há bùtere íbu ísí táà.
They killed two leopards in the bush.	há gbùru ágụ naàbụ n'ọ́hya.
I'll pay you four shillings for it.	á gà m akwụ́ gị́ ego ánọ màka yá.
We bought 7s worth of meat.	ànyị́ zụ̀tara ánụ ego ásâ.
He paid five shillings for meat.	ọ́ kwụ̀rụ égo íse màka ánụ.
I ate two eggs today.	é riri m akwá naàbụ táà.
There are five cups in our house.	ìkó íse dị n'íme ụlọ́ ányị.
I will cook eight eggs this morning.	á gà m esí ákwa ásatọ́ n'ụ̀tụ́tụ́ à.
She washed those ten cups.	ọ́ sàra ikó íri ahụ̀.
There are two beds in that house.	àkwa náàbụ dị n'íme ụlọ̀ áhụ̀.
They brought three bags.	há wètara akpa atọ́.
They made seven pots this month.	há kpụ̀rụ ite asâ n'ọ́ŋwa à.
I saw nine monkeys in the bush today.	á hụ̀rụ m eŋwe itenáánị n'ọhya taà.
There are two houses there.	ụ́lọ̀ náàbụ dị n'ébe ahụ̀.
There are eight knives in the bag.	ḿmà asátọ́ dị n'íme àkpa.
A (certain) man gave us nine fish.	ótù ŋwóké nyère anyị́ azụ̀ itenáánị.
We brought ten hoes.	ànyị́ wètara ọ́gụ̀ irí.

Drill 4. Go through the sentences in the preceding drill again, this time saying each sentence first as it is given, and then a second time subtracting one from each numeral. This will also give you more practice in the use of the numerical noun 'one'.

Drill 5. The above materials can now be applied to conversational exchanges. These can be varied almost indefinitely, of course. Notice that /òlé/ 'how many' or 'how much' works just like a numeral. There are several miscellaneous details in these exchanges which can best be learned as isolated expressions for the time being; in most cases, the patterns to which they belong will be introduced within the next few lessons. After practicing on these exchanges, you can work out similar conversations on your own with a considerable degree of freedom.

A. Are you going to go to market today?	A. ị ga agá ahyá taà.
B. Yes, I'm going to go right now.	B. óe. á gà m agá ùgbú à.
A. What are you going to buy?	A. gịnị́ kà ị gà azụ́.
B. I'm going to buy four measures of rice.	B. á gà m àzụ́ta íko ósíkapa ánọ.
A. Fine. Buy some meat and beans too.	A. ọ́ dị ḿmá. zụ̀tákwa anụ́ nà agwa.
B. I don't have much money.	B. è jíghị m nnúkwu egó.
A. I gave you twelve shillings this morning.	A. é nyère m gị́ ego íri nà abụ́a n'ụ̀tụ́tụ́ à.
B. It's all gone.	B. ọ́ gwụ́la..

A. How much are eggs?	A. àkwá ọ̀ bụ égo óle.
B. Thruppence each.	B. tọ́rọ, tọ́rọ.
A. That's too much.	A. ọ́ dàra ọ́nụ́.
I'll give you tuppence for one.	á gà m enyé gị́ kọ́pọ̀ náàbụ maka ótù.
B. O.K. Give me the money.	B. ọ́ dị ḿmá. wètá egó.
A. I want six. Here's the money.	A. á cọ̀rọ m isí. wèré egó.

Okoye went to the market.	Òkóyè gara áhya.
He bought three cups of rice.	ọ́ zụ̀rụ ikó ósikapa átọ.
He bought one cup for thruppence.	ọ́ zụ̀rụ ótú íko tọ́rọ.
He paid 9d for three cups.	ọ́ kwụ̀rụ náị màka ikó átọ.
He bought meat, too.	ọ́ zụ̀takwara ánụ.
He paid 3s for the meat.	ọ́ kwụ̀rụ égo átọ màka ánụ.

A. Where did Okoye go?	A. kèdú ebe Òkóyé gàra.
B. He went to market.	B. ọ́ gàra áhya.
A. What did he do there?	A. gị́nị́ kà ó mère n'ébe ahụ̀.
B. He bought rice and meat.	B. ọ́ zụ̀tara osíkapa nà ánụ.
A. How much did he pay?	A. égo óle kà ọ́ kwụ̀rụ.

B.	He paid nine pence for rice.	B.	ọ́ kwụ̀rụ náị màka osíkapa.
	He paid three shillings for meat.		ọ́ kwụ̀rụ égo átọ màka ánụ.
A.	Where is Okoye going?	A.	èbéé kà Okóyé nà agá.
B.	He's going to the market.	B.	ọ́ nà agá ahyá.
A.	What is he going to do there?	A.	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ gà emé n'ebe ahụ̀.
B.	He's going to buy rice and meat.	B.	ọ́ gà azụ́ ósikapa nà ánụ.
	I gave him five shillings.		é nyère m yá ego íse.
A.	For how much are you selling rice?	A.	égo óle kà ị́ nà eré ósikapa.
B.	It's three cups for one shilling.	B.	ọ́ bụ̀ ikó átọ, ótù égó.
A.	That's too much.	A.	ọ́ dàra ọ́nụ́. (~ ọ́ dị̀ ọ́nụ iké.)
	Reduce it for me.		bèére ḿ egó.
	Let me give you sixpence.		kà ḿ nye gị́ sisì.
B.	Give me ninepence.	B.	nyé ḿ naị.
A.	O.K.. Here's the money.	A.	ọ́ dị̀ ḿmá. wèré egó.

Notes:

1. The following is the essential vocabulary needed to handle the monetary system in Igbo. The word for a "pound" ($2.80 currently) is taken from English, and you may hear it with varying degrees of approximation to the English form. Say it as you hear it. Many of the other words in this group are also borrowed, but are more fully assimilated. On the basis of this vocabulary, you can figure out how to express any amount you are likely to need. For amounts such as seven pence, some speakers may prefer the simple noun plus numeral to the phrase given below.

1/2d:	áfụ̀	3d:	tọ́rọ
1d:	kọ́pọ̀	6d:	sísì
1 1/2d:	kọ́pọ̀ na áfụ̀	9d:	náị
2d:	kọ́pọ̀ náàbụ	1s:	ótù égó
		or	ótù shị́lị̀
7d:	sísì na kọ́pọ̀		
3/6	égo átọ nà sísì		

2. There have been a few instances of new verbal constructions introduced in this lesson. For the time being, learn them as

isolated forms; the patterns for them will be introduced later, and then you can apply the patterns to other verbs. Note even now, however, that the following do not fit any patterns you have previously learned.

It's all gone.	ọ́ gwụ́la.
Here's the money.	wèré egó. (lit., take money)
Give me the money.	wètá egó. (lit., bring money)
Reduce the price for me.	bèére ḿ egó.
Let me give you sixpence.	kà ḿ nye gị sisi.
I don't have much money.	è jíghi m nnúkwu egó.

3. One of the verb forms above, /wètá/, is derived from the verb /íwè/ 'pick up, take', with the verbal extension which you have met also in /ịzụ́ta/; again, the extension reflects the idea of action for or toward oneself; the combination means 'bring'. The form /bèére/ includes another extension, consisting of /r/ plus the preceding vowel, indicating action done for someone; the stem is /bè/ 'cut'. The form /zụ̀tákwa/, an imperative like /wètá/, includes still another extension, /kwá/; this refers to doing something in addition to what was previously mentioned. E.g.,

Buy meat and beans, too.	zụ̀tákwa anụ́ nà agwa.
He bought meat, too.	ọ́ zụ̀takwara ánụ.

4. In Lesson 6, p. 35, it was noted that /únù/ in some sentences had the alternant form /únú/, somewhat like the alternation of step-low to step-step in noun-noun phrases, but under more widespread circumstances which were not further defined. In this lesson, there have been two more examples of the same type:

kèdú ebe Òkóyé gàra.	Where did Okoye go?
èbéé kà Okóyé nà agá.	Where is Okoye going?

Although this alternation is identical in form with the one you have learned in phrases like /áhá òbodo/ 'the name of the town', the conditions are different. As defined in Lesson 6, this alternation takes place in a noun, and only before a noun beginning with low tone. In sentences like the above, this alternation occurs at the end of a noun or noun phrase, before a verb beginning with low tone. The full statement for this alternation is this: step-low becomes step-step at the end of the subject of a verb, before low tone in the verb, if something other than the subject begins the sentence. In the examples you have had, a place expression begins the sentence; it could as well be a time expression, or a contrasted object. Under the same circumstances, the alternation of low-low to low-step occurs, but not the alternation of step-step to step-same. Here are some of the crucial examples which will set the pattern for you:

gị́nị́ kà únú mère.	What did you do?
gị́nị́ kà únú nà emé.	What are you doing?
gị́nị́ kà Okóyé gà emé.	What will Okoye do?
gị́nị́ kà eŋwé nà erí.	What does a monkey eat?
but gị́nị́ kà ágụ́ nà erí.	What does a leopard eat?

5. In sentences ending with a locative expression introduced by /n'/, the locative does not take the tonal alternations that are found with other words. For example:

ọ́ hụ̀rụ anyị́ n'ahya. (not /n'ahyá/)	He saw us in the market.

Lesson 8.

You are already familiar with the "infinitive" as the form by which a verb may be cited. In this lesson, some uses of the infinitive are introduced, along with the tonal phenomena that accompany it. A major negative construction is also added. The new vocabulary items that are introduced should be practiced in constructions you have had earlier as well as in these sentences.

Drill 1. The basic tone of a verb stem is either step or low. The infinitive is formed with a prefix /í/ or /ị/ (depending on vowel harmony, of course). The tones of the entire infinitive forms are thus either step-step (e.g., /ịzụ́/ 'to buy') or step-low (e.g., /ịzà/ 'to sweep'). In this drill, infinitives are used only before forms whose tones do not change depending on what precedes. There can be no change after low in any case.

I want to go to town.	á cọ̀rọ m ịgá òbodo.
They want to go to Onitsha.	há cọ̀rọ ịgá Ọ̀nịca.
We want to buy two pots.	ànyị cọ̀rọ ịzụ́ íte náàbụ.
He wants to sell four baskets.	ọ́ cọ̀rọ íré ŋ̀kata anọ́.
He came to see you.	ọ́ byàra ịhụ́ gị.
We came to Oweri to buy clothes.	ànyị byàra Oweri ịzụ́ akwà.
He went to his farm to plant corn.	ọ́ gàra úgbó ya ịkụ́ ọkà.
He went to the store to buy soap.	ọ́ gàra ụ́lọ̀ áhyá ịzụ́ ncà.
I'm about to do the wash.	á nà m acọ́ ịsá akwà.
He's about to call them.	ọ́ nà acọ́ ịkpọ́ ha.
He began to look for his money.	ọ́ bídoro ịcọ́ egó ya.
They began to plant corn today.	há bídoro ịkụ́ ọkà táà.
I can do it.	é ŋwère m íke imé ya.
Can we eat five plantains?	ànyị ŋwere íke ịrí ògede isé.
She's about to sweep the compound.	ọ́ nà acọ́ ịzà ezí.
Can you cut up this meat?	í ŋwere íke ibè ánụ à.
He began to weave this cloth today.	ó bídoro ịkpà ákwà à táà.
I want to sweep the house today.	á cọ̀ro m ịzà ụ́lọ̀ táà.
They want to follow us.	há cọ̀rọ ísò anyị.
He's about to enter the house.	ọ́ nà acọ́ ịbà n'ụ́lọ̀.
They began to sing.	há bídoro ịbụ̀ ábụ̀.

Drill 2. Two possible combinations were avoided in the preceding drill: a step-tone infinitive followed by a form whose independent tones are either step-same or low-step. These are, of course, the two types of forms whose tones have alternants conditioned by what precedes (Lesson 4, esp. pp. 23-24). In the description of the alternations for such forms, a careful reservation was made: these alternations occur "in certain types of phrases". The sequence of an infinitive followed by a noun is not one of the types of phrases in which the alternations you have learned occur. Instead, forms with step-same remain unchanged (which means, of course, that they have the shape same-same after a non-low tone); however, there is a strange alternation for low-step: after an infinitive ending with step, low-step has the alternant same-same. Thus the two types represented by /ényi/ and /ìkó/ become identical after an infinitive with final step. The following illustrates only this pair of combinations.

I went to the market to buy meat.	á gàra m áhya ịzụ́ anụ.
Okoye wants to go to market.	Òkőyè cọrọ ị́gá ahya.
He's about to take a bath.	ọ́ nà acọ́ ịsá ahụ.
(cf. He took a bath.	ọ́ sàra ahụ́.)
(and He's taking a bath.	ọ́ nà asá áhụ.)
He began to work today.	ó bìdoro ị́rụ́ ọrụ taà.
(cf. He worked.	ọ́ rụ̀rụ ọ́rụ.)
(and He is working.	ọ́ nà arụ́ ọrụ́.)
They came to see us.	há byàra ị́hụ́ anyị.
We want to buy two cups.	ànyị́ cọ̀rọ ị́zụ́ iko naàbụ.
Can you eat five eggs?	ùnu ŋwere íke irí akwa íse.
He went to the store to buy something.	ọ́ gàra ụ́lọ̀ áhyá ịzụ́ ihe.
(cf. He bought something.	ọ́ zụ̀rụ íhe.)
(and He will buy something.	ọ́ gà azụ́ ihé.)
I want to wash my hands.	á cọ̀rọ m ị́sá aka ḿ.
(cf. I washed my hands.	á sàra m áka ḿ.)
(and I'm washing my hands.	á nà m asá aká m.)
He wants to read that book.	ọ́ cọ̀rọ ị́gụ́ akwụkwọ ahụ̀.
(cf. He read that book.	ọ́ gụ̀rụ ákwụkwọ ahụ̀.
(and He's reading that book.	ọ́ nà agụ́ akwụ́kwọ ahụ̀.)
She's beginning to cook the meat.	ọ́ nà ebído isí anụ.
I want to sell this book.	á cọ̀rọ m íré akwụkwọ à.
He went to his farm to plant rice.	ọ́ gàra úgbó ya ịkụ́ osikapa.

Drill 3. The verbal constructions which you have learned to use can all be negated by the use of a verbal suffix with the form /ghị/ after a step-tone verb stem or /ghị/ after a low-tone verb stem. The verb stem itself, no matter what its basic tone, has step tone in the negative. The (singular) pronominal elements before the verb, surprisingly, have low tone as they do in questions; negative questions are rare in Igbo, and are expressed in roundabout ways rather than by a tone change in the pronoun. The past and stative are not distinguished in the negative. The tones of noun objects after the negative pattern just as they do after an infinitive: step-same and low-step fall together in the form same-same after step.

He doesn't want that cloth.	ọ̀ cọ́ghị akwà áhụ̀.
I didn't go to Onitsha yesterday.	à gághị m Ọ̀nịca éci.
I didn't see your father there.	à hụ́ghị m nnà gị n'ebe ahụ̀.
He doesn't have any money.	ò ŋwéghị ego ọ́bụlà.
It isn't in the house.	ọ̀ dị́ghị n'ime ụlọ̀.
You didn't go to market today.	ị gághị ahya taà.
I didn't read that book.	à gụ́ghị m akwụkwọ ahụ̀.
I didn't write a letter today.	è déghị m akwụkwọ taà.
He didn't take a bath.	ọ̀ sághị ahụ.
You didn't buy eggs yesterday.	ị zụ́ghị akwa ecí.
It isn't my cup.	ọ̀ bụ́ghị iko ḿ.
He isn't from Oweri.	ò síghị Òweri.
I don't want to go to the store.	à cọ́ghị m ịgá ụlọ̀ áhyá.
He didn't plant corn yesterday.	ọ̀ kụ́ghị ọkà écí.
It's no good.	ọ̀ dị́ghị mmá.
I don't have one shilling.	è jíghị m ótù égó.
He isn't in the house.	ọ̀ nọ́ghị n'íme ụlọ̀.
He didn't take his money.	ò wéghị égó ya.
You didn't fan the fire.	ị fụ́ghị ọ́kụ.
I didn't weave this cloth today.	à kpághị m ákwá à táà.
She came today, but she didn't sweep the compound.	ọ́ byàra táà, mà ọ zághị ezí.
He bought meat, but he didn't cut it up.	ọ́ zụ̀tara ánụ, mà ọ béghị yá.
I don't have my book.	è jíghị m ákwụkwọ ḿ.

Drill 4. In the present and future, it is the verbal part of the construction, which appears as /nà/ and /gà/ in the affirmative, that takes the negative suffix /ghị́/. After this negated verbal part of the construction, the verbal noun undergoes no tonal alternation -- not even the alternation described for object nouns in the preceding drill. This, then, is the simplest of the negative constructions. However, we are still confined to singular pronoun subjects. The combination of the verbal noun with a following object noun includes, of course, instances of the tonal alternations you learned first.

She's not doing the wash.	ọ̀ nághị́ àsá akwà.
He came here today, but he's not going to eat here.	ọ́ byàra ébe à táà, ma ọ gághị́ èrí nrí n'ébe à.
I'm not working right now.	à nághị́ m àrụ́ ọrụ́ ùgbú à.
I'm not reading this book.	à nághị́ m àgụ́ akwụ́kwọ à.
I'm working today, but I'm not going to work tomorrow.	á nà m arụ́ ọrụ́ taà, mà a gághị́ m àrụ́ ọrụ́ ecí.
I'm not going to go to the store.	à gághị́ m àgá ụlọ̀ áhyá.
I'm going to go to town, but I'm not going to buy anything.	á gà m agá òbodo, mà a gághị́ m àzụ́ ihé.
He went to his farm, but he's not going to plant rice today.	ọ́ gàra úgbó ya, mà ọ gághị́ àkụ́ ósikapa taà.
She's here, but she isn't sweeping the compound.	ọ́ nọ̀ n'ébe à, mà ọ nághị́ azá ézi.
I'll buy the meat, but I'm not going to cut it up.	á gà m azụ́ta anụ́, mà a gághị́ m ebè yá.
I'm not going to follow you.	à gághị́ m esò únù.
He isn't singing now, but he's going to sing.	ọ̀ nághị́ abụ̀ ábụ̀ ugbú à, mà ọ́ gà ábụ̀ ábụ̀.

Drill 5. When a noun (including /ànyị́/, /únù/, and /há/) is used as the subject in a negative construction, a vowel prefix is used before the verb stem. This prefix always has non-low tone -- it is same after a non-low tone, step after low -- and the vowel is /a/ or /e/ depending on vowel harmony. After this prefix, the verb stem has its stem tone -- step or low -- and the negative suffix continues on the same tone. (In the case of /ànyị́/, /únù/, and /há/, you may hear alternants in which these forms have low tone throughout; then the prefix has low tone also, and the sequence of verb stem plus negative suffix has step-step or step-low depending on the stem tone of the verb.)

Okoye didn't work yesterday.	Òkóyè árụ́ghị ọrụ ecí.
We didn't see that house.	ànyị ahụ́ghị ụlọ̀ áhụ̀.
They didn't go to the market.	há agághị ahya.
You didn't cook plantains.	únù ésíghị ògede.
We didn't buy meat today.	ànyị azụ́ghị anụ taà.
They didn't do the wash yesterday.	há asághị akwà ecí.
They went to their farm, but they didn't plant corn.	há gàra úgbó ha, mà há akụ́ghị ọkà.
That isn't our house.	ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ ábụ́ghị ụlọ́ ányị.
This isn't my book.	ŋ̀ké à ábụ́ghị akwụkwọ ḿ.
My book isn't in my house.	ákwụkwọ ḿ adị́ghị n'ime ụlọ̀ ḿ.
My father didn't come here today.	ńnà ḿ abyághị ebe à táà.
My father isn't here, but he will come tomorrow.	ńnà ḿ anọ̀ghị n'ébe à, ma ọ́ gà abyá ecí.
We didn't sweep the compound.	ànyị azàghị ezí.
They didn't cut up the meat.	há ebèghị ánụ.
You didn't follow us.	únù ésòghị anyị.
We're not about to go to town.	ànyị anághị àcọ́ ịgá òbodo.
They aren't going to go to the store.	há agághị àgá ụlọ̀ áhyá.
You aren't reading your books.	únù ánághị àgụ́ akwụ́kwọ unù.
Okoye isn't going to come to school today.	Òkóyè ágághị àbyá ụ́lọ̀ ákwụ́kwọ taà.
They aren't following us.	há anághị esó ányị.
They're here, but they're not sweeping the compound.	há nọ̀ n'ébe à, mà há anághị azá ézi.

Notes:

The dialect variation mentioned at the beginning of Drill 5 above is probably the most important variation in negatives within what is generally known as "Central" Igbo. If you learn the forms as transcribed in these materials, you will be understood by anyone who claims to know "Central" Igbo. If you hear the variation described above, it will probably give you little difficulty in understanding, and you can learn the alternative pattern without much trouble. In the two columns below, the significant variations are illustrated with a few key examples. Identify the pattern you hear most commonly, and try to apply it consistently:

ànyị̀ azụ́ghị̀ akwà.	ànyị̀ azụ́ghị́ akwà.
únù ásághị̀ akwà.	ùnu asághị́ akwà.
há agághị̀ ahya.	hà agághị́ ahya.
ànyị̀ azàghị̀ ezí.	ànyị̀ azághị̀ ezí.
únù ésòghị̀ anyị́.	ùnu esóghị̀ anyị́.
há ebèghị̀ ányụ.	hà ebéghị̀ ányụ.

In the case of the singular pronouns, the pattern given in Drill 3 above appears to be the most common, though it seems to parallel the second rather than the first column of the plurals above. Converesely, you may occasionally hear the singular pronouns with step tone in the negative; the alternatives are just the reverse of the pattern given above. If you should hear the forms in the right-hand column below, you will understand them easily; and you can learn to use them by analogy with the major plural pattern introduced in Drill 5:

à gághị́ m ahya.	á gághị̀ m ahya.
ị̀ sághị́ akwà.	ị́ sághị̀ akwà.
ọ̀ gághị́ ahya.	ọ́ gághị̀ ahya.
à zághị̀ m ezí.	á zàghị̀ m ezí.
ì sóghị̀ ḿ.	í sòghị̀ ḿ.
ò béghị̀ ányụ.	ó bèghị̀ ányụ.

Somewhat farther from the relatively simple patterns introduced in these materials, you will hear other negative constructions characteristic of one or another area. In southern dialects, a negative particle /há/ is used in some constructions in place of /ghị́/; the dialects in question have some nasalized vowels which are not typical of all the dialects represented in our "compromise" form of Igbo, and this negative particle is usually nasalized, so that we might write it /hã/. The rules for tone appear to be the same as for /ghị́/. At the other extreme, in Onitsha, a negative particle /rọ́/ is used in many negative constructions. The two columns below compare our "compromise" Igbo with the dialect of Onitsha in a few sentences:

à gághị́ m ahya.	à jérọ́ m afya.
ị̀ sághị́ akwà.	ị̀ sárọ́ akwà.

Although the various dialects of Igbo -- which admittedly represent a variation probably greater than represented by American, British, Scottish, and other English dialects -- show a remarkable variation in negative constructions, it is encouraging to know that each dialect shows a rather consistent patterning of such constructions. Once you learn a few key forms, the remaining forms fit into place quite consistently. If you are exposed to a form of Igbo quite different from the "compromise" represented in these materials, watch out for a few basic distinctions which may be made:

1) (Singular) pronouns versus plural forms for "we, you, they".

2) Noun subjects: do they pattern like the plurals "we, you, they", or do the latter pattern like the singulars and other noun subjects differently?

3) Different verbal constructions: does the stative form its negative differently from the past, or the same? (As you learn other verbal constructions, check each one in the negative.)

4) Is /ghị̀/ (or /ghị́/) used in a given construction, or is /há/ or /rọ́/ preferred?

If you ask questions such as these -- of yourself, by finding out how the negatives of various constructions are expressed -- you should be able to learn first to understand the negatives in any dialect. Second, you can learn to use the local forms, although the forms given in these lessons will be almost universally understood in any case.

Suggestions for further drill:

The more perfectly you master the patterns of Igbo pronunciation and grammar by way of imitation and understanding, the more important it becomes to apply these patterns in expressions which you can construct for yourself. On your own or with the help of your instructional staff, prepare in English additional sentences, restricting yourself to the vocabulary you have learned, to illustrate the Igbo patterns you have learned. Important combinations include the following:

1) Present and future constructions using verbs with objects.

2) Constructions requiring an Igbo infinitive.

3) Past or stative negatives, including both step-tone and low-tone verb stems.

4) Present and future negatives involving any type of sentence.

Lesson 9.

Most of the tonal alternations characteristic of Igbo, and certainly all of the major ones, have been introduced by now. It has been necessary thus far to control very carefully the types of sentences you should use, in order to avoid confusion while mastering the unexpected tonal alternations. Now, however, a wider variety of constructions can be used, and more complex sentences can be handled. This lesson represents the beginning of what can be a rapid expansion in your use of the language.

Drill 1. The imperative: regular simple verbs. A typical Igbo verb stem consists of a single syllable. With a few exceptions, including some common verbs, there is a regular formation for the imperative. First, the verb stem itself has low tone in all cases. Second, there is a suffix, consisting of a vowel which has step tone. Thus the full imperative form has a rising melody, from low tone with the stem to step tone with the suffix. The vowel of the suffix depends on the vowel of the stem, according to the following rules:

After /i/ or /u/, the suffix vowel is /e/. E.g.,

sìé anụ́ 'cook meat' sùé ọkà 'pound corn'

(after /u/, some speakers use /o/: sùó ọkà)

After /ị/ or /ụ/, the suffix vowel is /a/. E.g.,

pị̀á yá 'sharpen it' gụ̀á yá 'read it'

(after /ụ/, some speakers use /ọ/: gụ̀ọ́ yá)

After the low vowels /e, o, a, ọ/, the suffix vowel is the same as the stem vowel. E.g.,

mèé yá 'do it' tòó yá 'praise him'

sàá akwà 'wash the clothes' cọ̀ọ́ yá 'look for him'

In giving an order to one person only, imperative forms like the illustrations above are used, without a pronoun. In giving an order to more than one person, the shortened pronoun form /nụ̀/ (related to /únù/ or /ụ́nụ̀/) is used after the verb.

Some of the following commands will be obvious from the vocabulary you have already had. Others involve new vocabulary items, some of which you will find more useful in the imperative, as here, than in any other construction. Useful commands should be memorized as items in their own right, but be sure you can react to the situation by using either the singular or plural as required.

Do it now.	mèé yá úgbu à.
(same, plural:)	mèé nụ̀ yá úgbu à.
Say it again.	kwùé yá ọ̀zọ́.
Wash your hands.	sàá aká gị.
(same, plural:)	sàá nụ̀ áka unù.
Please sweep the compound today.	bíkó, zàá ézi taà.
Go home.	làá ụlọ̀ (gị́).
(same, plural:)	làá nụ̀ ụ́lọ̀ (únù).
Get in the house!	bàá n'ụlọ̀.
Please look for my book.	bíkó, cọ̀ọ́ akwụ́kwọ ḿ.
Eat your (pl.) dinner.	rié nụ̀ ńri unù.
Read (pl.) this book next week.	gụ̀á nụ̀ ákwụkwọ à n'ízú ọ̀zọ́.
Take ('drink') this medicine.	ŋụ̀á ọgwụ́ à.
Ask your teacher about it.	jụ̀á onye ŋkúzi gị́ bànyére yá.
(same, plural:)	jụ̀á nụ̀ ónye ŋkúzi unù banyére yá.
Hid this money in the house.	zòó ego à n'íme ụlọ̀.

Drill 2. The imperative: irregular verbs. A few verbs have irregular imperative forms, at least as alternatives to the regular forms. These simply have to be memorized one by one; fortunately there aren't many of them, and some are so commonly used that they will not be difficult to remember. In some cases, the irregular imperative is simply the verb stem; in some cases, there is a suffix consisting of /r/ plus the stem vowel; in two cases a rising tone accompanies /wa/ or /ya/ very much as if it were /ụ̀á/ or /ịá/. Alternative imperatives are indicated for some of the following; these are all of the major irregular imperatives.

Please call your mother.	bíkó, kpọ́ nné gị. (~ kpọ̀ọ́)
Answer me.	zá ḿ. (_ zàá)
Show me the way.	zí ḿ ụzọ̀.
Give me three shillings.	nyé ḿ shịlị atọ́.
Please follow (pl.) me.	bíkó, sòró nụ̀ ḿ. (~ sòó)
Take your book.	wèré akwụ́kwọ gị.
Wait here.	cèré n'ebe à.
Wait for me there.	cèré ḿ n'ebe ahụ̀.
Tell him again.	gwǎ yá ọ̀zọ́.
Come here.	byǎ ebe à.
Come (pl.) to my house.	byǎ nụ̀ ụ́lọ̀ ḿ.

Drill 3. Verbs are frequently used with an extension which indicates that the action is performed for someone; the next word -- or the word after the /m̀/ of the first person singular subject or the /nụ̀/ of the plural imperative -- indicates the person for whom the action is performed. Apart from tone, this extension is identical with the past suffix: /r/ plus the preceding vowel. In the past, this suffix and the past suffix completely coalesce; there is only one /-rV/, it has low tone, and the only way in which this construction can be recognized is by the following reference to the person benefited. In all constructions other than the past, however, this extension follows the rest of the verb form, including the vowel suffix of the imperative. (This is also true of the extension /kwa/, but not of all extensions, as will be seen later.) Note for yourself the tones of the verbal noun and the infinitive for each verb stem tone.

There is one further peculiarity involved in this construction. If the verb form ends with a low tone (e.g., in the past), the final noun or pronoun object undergoes the expected tonal alternations after the noun or pronoun indicating the person benefited. But if the verb form ends with a non-low tone, the final object behaves as it would after an infinitive: a pronoun object has same tone, and nouns whose independent tones are either step-same or low-step have the tones same-same.

He is working for me.	ọ́ nà arụ́rụ ḿ ọrụ.
They are doing it for us.	há nà emére ányị ya.
I will sing you a song.	á gà m ábụ̀rụ́ gị́ abụ̀.
I will tell you (pl.) a story.	á gà m akọ́rọ unù ákụkọ.
He is reading them a book.	ọ́ nà agụ́rụ há akwụkwọ.
She's sweeping the compound for me.	ọ́ nà ázàrá ḿ ezi.

They worked for us.	há rụ̀rụ anyị́ ọrụ́.
She swept the compound for me.	ọ́ zàra ḿ ézi.
She cooked food for my father.	ó sìri ńnà ḿ nrí.
She sewed this cloth for me.	ọ́ kwàra ḿ akwá à.
I wrote a letter for my mother.	é dère m nné ḿ akwụ́kwọ.
I cooked this soup for myself.	é tère m oŋwé ḿ ofe à.

I want to work for you (pl.).	á cọ̀rọ m ịrụ́rụ unù ọ́rụ.
He began to tell us a story.	ó bìdoro ịkọ́rọ anyị akụkọ.
They began to sing us a song.	há bìdoro ịbụ̀rụ anyị́ abụ̀.
My father wants to do it for you.	ńnà ḿ cọ̀rọ ímére gị ya.
I want to cook soup for you.	á cọ̀rọ m ítére gị ofe.
Can you cut your meat for yourself?	ị̀ ŋwere íke ibère oŋwé gị́ anụ.ị́.

Please cook food for me.	bíkó, siére ḿ nri.
Sing. (pl.) us a song.	bụ̀ára nụ̀ anyị abụ̀.
Please call your father for m.	bíkó, kpọ́rọ ḿ nnà gị. (- kpọ̀ọ́rọ)
Ask your teacher about it for me.	jụ̀ára ḿ onye ŋkuzi gị bànyére yá.
Please sweep the house for us today.	bíkó, zàára ányị ụlọ̀ táà.
Please write a letter for me.	bíkó, dèére ḿ akwụkwọ.

Drill 4. The imperative: other verbal bases. As was noted above, the extension /kwa/ works just like /rV/; in the imperative, for example, it follows the full imperative form of the verb, including the suffix. Examples are included below. However, the extension /ta/ and some other extensions behave differently. In the imperative, there is no suffix; the typical imperative tone sequence low-step is used, but the low tone accompanies the verb stem, and the high tone accompanies the extension rather than a vowel suffix.

In addition to simple verbal stems plus extensions, there are other two-syllable verbal bases which will later be described more fully as compound verbs. A compound verb is distinguished by the fact that each syllable of the base is itself a verb in its own right. Until you know a good deal more vocabulary, you will not always be able to tell whether a two-syllable base is a compound or a simple verb with an extension; nor does it matter. The important point at present is that, in the imperative, the first stem does not take a suffix. Actually, the entire two-syllable base has the appropriate vowel suffix after the vowels /i/ and /u/, but not after any other vowels.

When /kwa/ and /rV/ are both used after a verb, the meaning can be ambiguous. For example, /siékwara ḿ anụ/ can mean either 'Cook meat too (as well as rice) for me' or 'Cook meat for me too (as well as for him)'.

Sweep the house, too.	zàákwa ụlọ̀.
Please look (pl.) for my book too.	bíkó, cọ̀ọ́kwa nụ̀ ákwụkwọ ḿ.
Read that book too.	gụ̀ọ́kwa akwụ́kwọ ahụ̀.
Cook fish for them, too.	siékwara há azụ̀.
Please wash our clothes for us too.	bíkó, sàákwara ányị akwá ányị.

Please bring my book.	bíkó, wètá akwụ́kwọ ḿ.
(same, plural:)	bíkó, wètá nụ̀ ákwụkwọ ḿ.
Buy beans, fish, and palm oil.	zụ̀tá àgwa, ázụ̀, nà mmánụ ŋkwụ́.
Please bring (pl.) twenty chairs into the schoolhouse.	bíkó, bùté nụ̀ ọ́gụ océ n'ime ụlọ̀ ákwụkwọ.

Eat up (pl.) all the food.	ricá nụ̀ ńri niíle.
Please buy salt and palm oil for us.	bíkó, zụ̀tára ányị nnu nà mmánụ ŋkwụ́.
Buy fish and pepper, too.	zụ̀tákwa azụ̀ na ósè.
Bring me a chair, too.	bùtékwara ḿ oce.
Please bring (pl.) your teacher your books tomorrow, too.	bíkó, wètákwara nụ̀ ónye ŋkúzi unù ákwụkwọ unù éci.
Please close the door.	bíkó, kwàcíe ụzọ̀.
Please close the door for me.	bíkó, kwàcíere ḿ ụzọ̀.
Please open the door.	bíkó, mèghé ụzọ̀.
Please open the door for him.	bíkó, mèghére yá ụzọ̀.
Cover the pot.	kpụ̀cíe ìte.

Drill 5. A verbal construction somewhat similar to the imperative in both form and meaning is the "hortative"; the term indicates urging that something be done. In the first person plural, this construction parallels the English 'Let's do it'. In the third person singular or plural, the usual English parallels are paraphrases like 'He should do it', 'He'd better do it', 'Have him do it'. In the first person singular, 'I'd better do it' is a good equivalent. This construction is not normally used in the second person; the imperative replaces it.

Before discussing the form of this construction, a careful statement about equivalences between languages is in order. Because of the unfortunate traditions of English teaching, with an emphasis on archaic literary usage, speakers of Igbo have generally been taught that the English equivalent of the hortative /kà ọ́ gaa/ is 'Let him go'. In modern conversational English, however, 'Let him go' expresses permission, and that is not the meaning of the Igbo hortative. We still use 'let' with a really hortative meaning only in somewhat formal situations, as 'Let it be said here and now', or in literary quotations like 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone'. The urging or suggestion expressed by the Igbo hortative is much better reflected in English by 'He should do it'. To some speakers of Igbo, this and all of our other translations seem much too strong. The problem is not in the English equivalents used here, nor is there a danger that you will not understand the Igbo construction properly. The problem, if any, arises simply from the difference between the literary English taught in schools and the modern colloquial English that we speak natively.

In form, the Igbo hortative can be simply defined on the basis of the first two sentences below. It is introduced by /kà/. The subject (pronoun or noun) is normal except that 'I' is /ḿ/ before the verb instead of the split form. The verb form is identical with the imperative if the verb stem (or the first stem in the case of the extended verbs and compounds introduced so far) has low tone; but if the verb stem (or first stem) has step tone, then the entire verb form has same tone after non-low.

(So far, no two-syllable bases have been used in which the second stem independently has low tone. When these are introduced later, some additional tone sequences will also appear.)

To make a question out of a hortative, /ọ̀ bụ/ 'is it (that)?' is used before the complete hortative construction.

Let's sweep it.	kà anyị zàá yá.
Let's eat it.	kà anyị rie yá.
Let's go to town this morning.	kà anyị gaa òbodo n'ụtụ́tụ́ à.
Let's stay home today.	kà anyị nọ̀ọ́ n'ụlọ̀ táà.
Let's give him food.	kà anyị nye yá nri.
Let's buy oranges for ourselves too.	kà anyị zụakwara óŋwe ányị òromá.
He should cook yams and meat.	kà ó sie jí nà ánụ.
He should cook soup, too.	kà ó teekwa ofé.
They should do the wash for us.	kà há saara ányị akwà.
He should take this knife.	kà ó wèré mmá à.
Have your father pay for it.	kà ńnà gị kwụa ụgwọ́ ya.
He should close that door, too.	kà ọ́ kwàcíekwa ụzọ̀ áhụ̀.
He should take this medicine now.	kà ọ́ ŋụa ọgwụ́ à ugbú à.
He should drink lots of water too.	kà ọ́ ŋụakwa mmíri rinné.
Your children should eat lots of meat.	kà ụ́mụ̀ únù ríe anụ́ rinné.
Should I cook rice today?	ọ̀ bụ ka ḿ sie osíkapa taà.
Should we bring you our books?	ọ̀ bụ ka anyị wètára gị akwụkwọ ányi.
Should I call my father?	ọ̀ bụ ka ḿ kpọ nnà ḿ. (- kpọọ)
Shall we open the door?	ọ̀ bụ ka anyị meghe ụzọ̀.
Should we read this book next week?	ọ̀ bụ ka anyị gụa akwụ́kwọ à n'ízú ọ̀zọ́.
Should I come this afternoon?	ọ̀ bụ ka ḿ bya n'èhíhyé à.
Should he do it again?	ọ̀ bụ ka ó mee yá ọ̀zọ́.

__Drill 6.__ The hortative is also used (in all persons) in another convenient construction. You have learned how to say things like 'I want to do it': /á cọ̀rọ m ímé ya/. In all such instances with the infinitive, the subject wants himself to perform the desired action, not someone else. If one person wants another to do something, the hortative is used; the first sentence below might be awkwardly translated as 'I want that he go to market'.

I want him to go to market.	á cọ̀rọ m ka ọ́ gaa ahyá.
I want you to look for oranges and bananas in the market.	á cọ̀rọ m ka ị́ cọọ ọ̀rọmá nà únère n'áhya.
He wants me to give him money.	ọ́ cọ̀rọ ka ḿ nye yá egó.
He wants us to show him the way.	ọ́ cọ̀rọ ka anyị́ zi yá ụzọ̀.
I want you (pl.) to wait for me here.	á cọ̀rọ m ka únù cére ḿ n'ebe à.
I want them to buy palm oil for me too.	á cọ̀rọ m ka há zụtakwara ḿ mmanụ ŋkwụ́.
Do you (pl.) want me to do the wash for you today too?	ùnu cọrọ ka ḿ saakwara unù ákwà táà.
Our teacher wants us to read this book next week.	ónye ŋkúzi ányị cọ̀rọ ka anyị́ gụa akwụkwọ à n'ízú ọ̀zọ́.
He also wants us to tell a story in Igbo.	ọ́ cọ̀kwara ka anyị́ kọọ akụ́kọ n'Ìgbo.
I want you to sweep the compound for me this morning.	á cọ̀rọ m ka ị́ zàára ḿ ezi n'ụ̀tụ́tụ́ à.

__Notes:__

Enough verbal bases consisting of more than one syllable -- compounds and verbs with extensions -- have been used by now for you to begin to feel at home with their uses. A summary of their forms as illustrated so far is thus in order.

A compound verb consists of two -- and __only__ two -- independent verb stems. Either a simple verb or a compound verb may also have one or more verbal extensions. Among the extensions that have been used thus far, /kwa/ and /rV/ are unique in that they may be used after the vowel suffix of the imperative and hortative. The extensions /ta ~ te/ and /ca/, along with verb stems used as the second member of compounds, are always joined directly to the preceding stem; the imperative or hortative vowel suffix follows the entire base __if__ the base ends in one of the vowels /i/ or /u/.

The extensions used up to this point, and also the stems that have been used as the second members of compounds, must all be taken as having inherently step tone. In other words, the only combinations you have had in two-syllable bases are of forms whose inherent tones are either step-plus-step or low-plus-step. In some constructions (e.g., past and imperative), these two sequences are not distinguishable. In other constructions (e.g., infinitive, verbal noun, and hortative) the two sequences differ. The following is a summary of the possible combinations in constructions you have had; Igbo illustrations are given without English equivalents, but be sure you know the meaning in each case.

	Step plus step	Low plus step
Infinitive:	ọ́ cọ̀rọ ịzụ́ta ya	ọ́ cọrọ íwèta yá
Verbal noun:	ọ́ nà azụ́ta yá	ó nà ówètá yá
Hortative:	kà ọ́ zụta yá	kà ó wètá yá
Imperative:	zụ̀tá yá	wètá yá
Past:	ọ́ zụ̀tara yá	ó wètara yá

When you compare the above forms with those of simple verbs, there is actually only one detail that is at all unusual: the infinitive of a low-plus-step combination ends with low tone: /íwèta/.

Now study carefully once more the explanatory materials at the beginning of each drill in this lesson. There is a reason for every detail mentioned; be sure you understand what the reason is, and practice constructing relevant sentences by way of illustration.

Practice by listening to Igbo sentences like those in this lesson at random, and make sure you understand them. Try also covering up the Igbo side on each page, and make sure you can respond accurately in Igbo with an equivalent for each English sentence.

Lesson 10.

Additional verbal constructions are introduced in this lesson. In addition to drilling on the illustrations given here, try to apply these new patterns to other situations you have learned to talk about in Igbo.

Drill 1. The new verbal construction introduced here will be labelled "completive". It expresses an action that is complete, and the effects of which are a present state. In many cases, the closest English equivalent is the so-called "perfect", as in 'She has cooked food (and the food is therefore in a cooked state now)'. In other cases, however, English describes the present state rather than the action that produced it, as in 'It is dry', where Igbo can only use a verb and say 'It has dried (and is now dry)'. In this drill, only the singular subject pronouns will be used; they are in the form you know best. The verbal base has its stem tone. After the base is a suffix, the full form of which is /-Vla/. The first vowel of the suffix is exactly the same as in the imperative and hortative; it is missing after the same small group of irregular verbs, and after bases of more than one syllable if they end with a vowel other than /i/ or /u/. The suffix is on a same level after a step-tone stem, and on a step level after a low-tone stem.

Note: it may be that some speakers include the vowel of the completive suffix after all compound bases. Some speakers may also use both forms with a difference in meaning. Without the vowel (where it is missing according to the above rule), a given sentence may mean 'I have sent him home (and he is presumably there now)'; with the suffix, the same sentence may mean 'I have sent him home (at some time or other, perhaps more than once, but he may have returned here)'.

She has cooked food.	ó síela nrí.
She has swept the compound.	ọ́ zàála ézi.
I have called my father.	á kpọ́ọla ḿ nnà ḿ.
Have you come? (a greeting)	ị byála.
I have seen all the people.	á hụ́la ḿ ndi mmádụ̀ níile.
He has brought bananas and oranges.	ó wètála unère na oromá.
Has he eaten the meat?	ò rícala anụ̀.
Have you shut the door?	ị kwacíela ụzọ̀.
He has opened the door.	ó méghela ụzọ̀.
He is dead.	ọ́ ŋwụ́ọla.
It is dry.	ọ́ kọ́ọla.
It's all gone.	ọ́ gwụ́la.

Drill 2. When the completive is used with a noun subject (including 'we, you-pl., they'), the verb form begins with a vowel prefix, /a/ or /e/ depending on vowel harmony. In the following, the tone of this vowel is written as identical with the preceding tone. Some speakers, however, use step tone after low. You will also find in this drill some new expressions in which a verb plus an object, or a subject plus a verb, corresponds to a single English word. Some of these, like the expression for being tired, are reasonably analyzable. Others, like the expression for drying (with reference to grass or other living things), are combinations that should simply be learned as such without attempting to assign a meaning to each element. In some such cases, the noun and verb are etymologically related.

Perhaps a more extensive warning is in order. All languages have elements that are arbitrary and inexplicable. We notice such peculiarities in a new language, but we are generally unconscious of them in our own. An American learning Igbo may notice that part of an expression meaning 'dry up' is identical with the verb 'call'; a native speaker of Igbo can no more explain this coincidence than most of us can explain the 'goose' in 'gooseberry' (which even historically has nothing at all to do with geese). We may similarly be puzzled to find an Igbo expression for 'ripen' which seems to suggest 'ripen a ripening'; but with equal arbitrariness we can speak in English of 'fighting a fight', but hardly of 'battling a battle'. It is simply unreasonable to expect every combination of words to have a facile explanation -- unless you would like to explain what is meant by buckling a swash, flushing a four, or timing a two!

We've finished reading this book.	ànyị́ agụ́cala akwụ́kwọ à.
Have you (pl.) eaten all the bananas?	ùnu erícala unère níile.
Have they done the wash?	hà asáala ákwà.
All the people have come.	ńdi mmádụ̀ níile abyála.
The clothes are dry.	ákwà akọ́ọla.
The grass is dry.	áhịhya akpọ́ọla ŋkụ́.
This orange is ripe.	òromá à acáala.
The food is all gone.	ńri agwụ́la.
I'm tired.	íke agwụ́la ḿ.
This cloth is torn.	ákwá à akáala nká.
This banana is rotten.	únèré à eréela.
We have brought your books.	ànyị́ ewètála akwụkwọ gị́.
My father has paid for it.	ńnà ḿ akwụ́ala ụgwọ́ ya.
They have given me money for food.	há enyéla ḿ egó màka ńri.
We have brought twenty chairs.	ànyị́ ebǔtéla ọgụ océ.

Drill 3. The negative construction corresponding in meaning to the affirmative completive is, in form, a past negative. The only distinguishing characteristic is that a verbal extension /bè/ is added to the base. Compare the following:

He didn't do it.	ò méghị ya.
He didn't sweep it.	ọ̀ zághị yá.
He hasn't done it.	ò mébèghị yá.
He hasn't swept it.	ọ̀ zábèghị yá.

In all forms of this type, including those with complex bases, the first tone of the verbal form is step, and the remainder of the form is low throughout, no matter what stem tones are involved. Note that this makes it impossible to distinguish between a preceding step-tone stem and a low-tone stem. The last sentence above could also mean 'He hasn't answered it', from /ị́zá/ rather than /ị́zà/ 'sweep'. Remember that verbs with different stem tones have identical tonal shapes also in the past and imperative.

In the following, examples of this construction are incorporated in samples of what can now become daily conversation for you.

A.	Are you going to market this afternoon?	A.	ị ga agá ahyá n'èhíhyé à.
B.	No. I haven't finished my work here.	B.	ḿbà. à rụ́càbeghị m ọ́rụ ḿ n'ebe à.
A.	You'll have time to go right now.	A.	ị́ gà eŋwé ehè ị́gá úgbu à.
	The clothes aren't dry.		ákwà akọ́càbeghị.
B.	Fine. Do you want me to buy yams or rice?	B.	ọ́ dị ḿmá. ị cọrọ ka ḿ zụta jí, m'ọ̀bụ osíkapa.
A.	Buy beans, palm oil, and meat.	A.	zụ̀tá àgwa, m̀mánụ ŋkwụ, nà ánụ.
	Here's ten shillings.		wèré shịlị irí à.
B.	O.K..	B.	ọ́ dị ḿmá.

A.	Has your guest come?	A.	ọ́nye ọbyà únù ọ byála.
B.	We haven't seen him.	B.	ànyị́ ahụ́bèghị yá.
	But we can wait for him.		mà anyị́ ŋwère íke icé ya.
A.	Have you eaten?	A.	ùnu eríela nrí.
B.	No. We haven't begun to cook.	B.	ḿbà. ànyị́ ebídòbeghị ísí nri.
A.	Good. Let's have a drink.	A.	ọ́ dị ḿmá. kà anyị́ ŋụa mmánya.

Now go back to the simpler examples in the first two drills of this lesson, and change each affirmative sentence to a negative if it will make sense. Remember that a question cannot be made negative.

Drill 4. Review the statements in Lesson 9 for the formation of the hortative. Two key examples are:

kà anyị́ gaa.	Let's go.
kà anyị́ zàá yá.	Let's sweep it.

Now, if the /kà/ is omitted and the rest of the construction left unchanged, the result is a construction which we will call the "conditional". A conditional clause such as /ànyị́ gaa/ may be translated as 'When we go' or 'If we go'; the reference is always to something that has not as yet taken place. If the action referred to is fully expected, or if a time is set for it, the conditional may be preceded by /ŋ̀gbe/ 'time'. If the action is rather tentative, the conditional may be preceded by /ọ́ bụrụ nà/ 'if it is that'.

Note that the English 'When he has eaten' also refers to an action that has not as yet taken place; it has nothing to do with the Igbo completive. The idea of 'finish' is rather expressed in the Igbo conditional by the verbal extension /cá/.

In these longer complex sentences, work first for accuracy and smoothness; as you build up to faster speech, be careful to imitate the Igbo timing and rhythm without sacrificing accuracy.

If you go to market today, please buy salt for me.	ị́ gaa ahyá taà, bíkó, zụ̀tára ḿ nnu.
If I go to Umuahia tomorrow, I'll try to see your father.	ḿ gaa Ụmụ̀-áhyà éci, á gà m áŋwà ị́hụ́ nnà gị́.
When your teacher comes, tell him I want to see him.	ónye ŋkúzi ụnụ̀ byá, gwá yá nà á cọ̀rọ m ị́hụ́ ya.
When you finish your work, we'll talk about it.	ị́ rụca ọrụ́ gị, ànyí gà akpá ŋkàtá bànyére yá.
When the clothes are dry, bring them in the house.	ákwà kọ́ca, wébàtá yá n'ime ụlọ̀.
If those oranges are ripe, buy ten.	òromá ahụ̀ cáa áca, zụ̀tá íri.
When you're rested, come to my house.	ị́ zùcá iké, byǎ ụlọ̀ ḿ.
When I get home, I'm going to take a bath.	ŋ̀gbe ḿ rue ụlọ̀, á gà m asá áhụ.

When the sun sets, all the farmers will return home.	ŋ̀gbe ánya aŋwụ́ dàá, ńdi ugbó niíle gà aláci ụ́lọ̀ há.
If I should go to Umuahia next week, you can go with me.	ọ́ bụrụ nà ḿ gaa Ụmụ̀-áhyà n'ízú ọ̀zọ́, í ŋwère íke isò ḿ ga.
I've never eaten cassava, but if you cook some I'll eat it.	è ríbèghị m ákpụ ḿbụ, mà í sie ọ̀ŋwa, á gà m erí yá.
I've never been to Abakaliki, but if I go next month I'll try to see your family.	à gábèghị m Abákalíki ḿbụ, mà ọ́ bụrụ nà ḿ gaa n'ọŋwa ọ̀zọ́, á gà m áŋwà ị́hụ́ ndibé gị.
If I have a chance, I want to go to the Western Region next year.	ḿ ŋwe ehè, á cọ̀rọ m ị́gá ọ̀dịda ánya aŋwụ́ n'afọ́ ọ̀zọ́.

Drill 5. There is one further development from the form of the hortative construction. Without the /kà/, as you have seen above, what remains is the conditional. Now drop off the subject (pronoun or noun), and what remains is simply the verbal base plus a suffix where appropriate. This is still another construction, which we will call the "consecutive". The consecutive expresses an action (or actions) in sequence, after the first, performed by the same subject. In English, all such actions are expressed in the same way: "I came, I saw, I conquered". In Igbo, it is sufficient to express the time or kind of action with the first verb only; everything after that is expressed by the consecutive construction. This drill is divided into subsections to define and illustrate a restriction in the use of the consecutive, a further development of it, and certain alternatives to it.

(1) The simple consecutive, as defined above, is most commonly used with the past. When used with the future, the reference must be actions in mere sequence, not a second action expressing the purpose of the first. With other constructions, actions tend to be simultaneous rather than consecutive, and require other means of expression. In the past, a convenient instance of the consecutive is /mésya/ followed by another consecutive, meaning that an action took place 'and it was done and' another action took place.

I returned home and cooked.	á làra m ụ́lọ̀, síe ite.
We went to our friend's house and danced.	ànyị́ gàra ụ́lọ̀ ényí ányị, gwùé egwú.
We all came to my house last evening and told stories.	ànyị́ niíle byàra ụ̀lọ̀ ḿ n'àbalị́ gára aga, kọ́ọ akụ́kọ.
We ate, and then we read.	ànyị́ riri ńri, mésya gụa akwụ́kwọ.
We finished our work, and then we sang songs.	ànyị́ rụ̀cara ọ́rụ ányị, mésya bụ̀á abụ̀.

He ate dinner, and then went to see a friend of his.	ó ríri ńri, mésya gáa ịhụ́ enyì yá.
I'll stay home and write a letter.	á gà m ánọ̀ n'ụ́lọ̀ dée akwụ́kwọ.

(2) In the future, a mere sequence of actions more commonly implies that the first is completed before the second is begun. This is typically expressed by first using, after the future, the conditional form /é mesya/ (with an "impersonal" subject, which you will also meet elsewhere) 'when it is done', or 'and then'. After this, it is possible to use either an ordinary future or a special type of consecutive, which includes a low-tone pronoun or a low-tone vowel prefix (/a ~ e/) after a noun subject. For the first person singular, the pronoun may be either /m̀/ or the 'split' form /à ... ḿ/ (with step tone accompanying /ḿ/).

When I get home, I'm going to eat dinner and then write a letter.	Ọ̀gbe ḿ rue ụlọ̀, á gà m erí nrí, é mesya a gà m edé akwụ́kwọ.
	or ... é mesya èdée ḿ akwụkwọ.
	or ... é mesya m̀ dée akwụ́kwọ.
I'm going to finish reading this book, and then I'm going to rest.	á gà m agụ́ca akwụ́kwọ à, é mesya a gà m ézù iké.
	or ... èzué ḿ ike.
	or ... m̀ zué iké.
I want to finish my work, and then I'll help you.	á cọ̀rọ m írụ́ca ọrụ ḿ, é mesya a gà m enyére gị́ aka.
	or ... ènyére ḿ gị aka.
	or ... m̀ nyére gị́ aka.

(3) However, it is also extremely common in the future, even where English uses "and" to connect two verbs, that a definite element of purpose is implied. In such cases, Igbo uses an infinitive to express the second action, as in the following.

I want to go to market and buy meat and yams.	á cọ̀rọ m ị́gá ahya, ị́zụ́ta anụ nà jí.
Let's go to Okafo's house and look at his pictures.	kà anyị́ gaa ụlọ́ Okâfọ, ịhụ́ fòtó yá.

(4) A sequence of actions in the form of commands is expressed by a series of imperatives; the conditional connective /é mesya/ may be used to join them if the first action is separately completed before the second is begun.

Take this medicine (and drink).	wèré ọgwụ́ à ŋụ́á.
Please go to the market and buy pepper.	bíkó, gàá ahyá zụ̀tá osè.
Finish your work and then go home.	rụ̀cá ọrụ́ gị, é mesya làá ụlọ̀.
Do the wash, and then sweep the compound.	sàá akwà, é mesya zàá ézi.

Drill 6. You have learned the use of /ŋ̀gbe/ 'time' with the conditional to express a future action the time of which is reasonably certain. The same /ŋ̀gbe/ can be used with the past construction to form a subordinate clause referring to a known time in the past: 'When he went' and the like. There is nothing particularly strange about this, except that the first person singular subject pronoun must be /ḿ/ instead of the 'split' form; you can construct many similar sentences on your own. This construction may, however, sometimes be used before other constructions than the past, including even the future, with reference to a completed action, as 'When he has done it'.

When I saw him, he was eating.	ŋ̀gbe ḿ hụ̀rụ yá, ọ́ nà erí nrí.
When I went to town today, I saw your mother.	ŋ̀gbe ḿ gàra obodo táà, á hụ̀rụ m nné gị́.
When he finished his work, he went home.	ŋ̀gbe ọ́ rụ̀cara ọ́rụ yá, ọ́ gàra ụ́lọ̀ yá.
When the sun set, it began to rain.	ŋ̀gbe ánya aŋwụ́ dàra, m̀mírí bìdoro ízò.
When it began to rain, we came inside the house.	ŋ̀gbe mmírí bìdoro ízò, ànyị́ bàtara n'ụ́lọ̀.

Notes:

Apart from the constructions that have been specifically described in this lesson, your major difficulties are likely to be with the uses of individual words, and with rather specialized idiomatic expressions. The following notes deal with a number of these details.

"Ripen": the sequence /ịcá áca/ is used in some constructions; it is a verb plus object, and the two words are related. In some constructions, however, the verb alone may be used. Compare, from this lesson:

òromá à acáala.	This orange is ripe.
òromá ahù cáa áca...	If those oranges are ripe, ...

"Become dry": two different expressions are used in this lesson. /ọ́ kọ́ọla/ means 'It is dry' with reference to something that has been made wet with water or other liquid, as clothes that have been washed. /ọ́ kpọ́ọla ŋkụ́/ means 'It is dry' with reference to something that naturally contains moisture, particularly plants; when dry in this sense, they are capable of being burned.

"Or": the expression /m'ọ̀bụ/ is, in full, /mà ọ bụ/, beginning with /mà/ 'but'. The remainder is like a question, 'is it?'; in this case, the deeply underlying force of what we have called "questions" is evident: such constructions are basically hypothetical statements, and "or" is expressed as 'but it may be'.

Types of personal noun compounds: /ónye ọbyà/ has been translated as 'guest'; under some circumstances 'stranger' or 'visitor' might be a better equivalent (a fact which gives rise to the common West African English expression 'my stranger' for 'my guest'). /ónye/ means 'person' in a number of compounds; compare /ónye ŋkúzi/ 'teacher'. /ọ́byà/ is a noun which apparently is related to /byá/ 'come'. Nouns of this type have plural counterparts beginning with /ndí/: /ńdi ọbyà/, /ńdi ŋkúzi/.

The sun and Nigerian geography: by itself, /ánya/ is usually the equivalent of 'eye'; 'the sun' may be expressed as either /áŋwụ/ alone or /ánya aŋwụ́/. (It is hardly necessary to get involved in philosophical speculation as to whether the eye is considered the source of light, since shutting the eyes produces darkness.) The sun rises: /(ánya) aŋwụ́ nà awá/; and it sets or 'falls': /(ánya) aŋwụ́ nà ádà/). Using a type of verbal noun derived from the appropriate verbs, the Eastern Region of Nigeria is /ọ̀wụ́wa anya aŋwụ́/, and the Western Region is /ọ̀dịda ánya aŋwụ́/. The Northern Region is expressed as "Hausa Highlands": /úgwu Awusa/. (As of this writing, all the Igbo speakers we have consulted left Nigeria after the foundation of the Midwestern Region, and do not know an Igbo term for it.)

/m̀bụ́/: this has occurred only in the form /ḿbụ/ after a step tone. With the negative construction corresponding to the completive, it can be translated as '(n)ever'. Elsewhere, if may mean 'for the first time'.

"Cook": an idiomatic expression for preparing a meal is /ísí ìte/, literally 'cook a pot'.

Recreation: /ígwù égwu/ is normally translated in West African English as 'play'; unlike American usage, this implies dancing, singing, drumming, and general merry-making -- just 'having fun'.

"Last" and "next": the words for 'week' /ízù/, 'month' /ọ́ŋwa/, 'year' /áfọ̀/, and some others enter into patterns to express 'last ...': /ízú gára aga/, /ọ́ŋwa gára aga/, /áfọ́ gára aga/; and 'next ...': /ízú ọ̀zọ́/, /ọ́ŋwa ọ̀zọ́/, and /áfọ́ ọ̀zọ́/.

Lesson 11.

A few more details of the Igbo verbal system remain to be described and drilled. Preliminary to specific points, a summary of the entire verbal system is given on the following two pages, in chart form. There are two major additions, in this summary, to what has already been introduced:

(1) The negative imperative is listed on the bottom line of the chart. This consists of a vowel prefix, /á/ or /é/ depending on vowel harmony; the verbal base exactly as it appears in the infinitive form; and a suffix /la/ with the same tone as the preceding syllable. Paralleling the affirmative imperative, the plural form of the negative imperative adds /nụ̀/.

(2) Two-syllable bases are included of which the component parts independently have the tones step - low and low - low. In all constructions, these two combinations merge in their tonal shapes. The original tone of the first component can never be reconstructed from the compound base. However, in several constructions such bases end with low tone if nothing follows or if a noun object follows, but with step tone if a pronoun object follows; the pertinent forms with pronoun object are listed in the final column of the chart.

In a few constructions, a vowel prefix is used before the verb if there is a noun subject; in such cases, an illustration with a noun subject (the proper name /Àzụ́/) is added.

It is most important to note that, apart from the negative imperative, only one negative construction is listed, and it is labelled "General Negative". This does not mean, of course, that this negative construction is used to negate all of the affirmative constructions other than the imperative. It does mean, however, that all other negatives (in the dialect with which we are concerned) are in some way derived from this one, or are expressed by some kind of circumlocution. Semantically, anything can be negated; formally, however, there is only one basic type of negation. The details of the derived negatives and negative-like circumlocutions are described after the summary chart.

(It is also true that some dialects use additional negative constructions. Once you have mastered the system listed here, you will be better equipped to pick up such variations on your own. Even though the system given here may be minimal, it is adequate for anything you will need to say.)

Most of the phrases given in the following chart are in themselves adequate for drill. For those that are not, a series of dots indicates that something should be added; below the chart, appropriate completions are suggested so that every item can be used.

meghe for
kpaci throughout

	Stem: Step "go"	**Stem: Low** "rest"	**Stems: Step, Step** open "~~look~~ the door"
Infinitive:	ịgá	ízù íke	ímeghe ~~íkpáci~~ ụzọ̀
Past:	ọ́ gàra	ó zùru íke	ọ́ kpàciri ụ́zọ̀
Verbal noun:	ọ́ $\binom{\text{nà}}{\text{gà}}$ agá	ọ́ $\binom{\text{nà}}{\text{gà}}$ ézù íké	ọ́ $\binom{\text{nà}}{\text{gà}}$ akpáci ụzọ̀
Imperative:	gàá	zùé iké	kpàcíe ụzọ̀
Completive: Noun subj.:	ọ́ gáala Àzụ́ agáala	ó zùéla iké Àzụ́ ezùéla iké	ọ́ kpáciela ụzọ̀ Àzụ́ akpáciela ụzọ̀
Hortative:	kà ọ́ gaa	kà ó zùé iké	kà ọ́ kpacie ụzọ̀
Conditional:	ọ́ gaa, ...	ó zùé iké, ...	ọ́ kpacie ụzọ̀, ...
Consecutive:	... gáa	... zùé iké	... kpácie ụzọ̀
Sequential: Noun subj.:	... ọ̀ gáa ... Àzụ́ àgáa	... ò zué iké ... Àzụ́ èzué iké	... ọ̀ kpácie ụzọ̀ ... Àzụ́ àkpácie ụzọ̀
General Neg.: Noun subj.:	ọ̀ gághị Àzụ́ agághị	ò zúghị íke Àzụ́ ezúghị íke	ọ̀ kpácíghị ụzọ̀ Àzụ́ akpácíghị ụzọ̀
Neg. Imper.:	ágála	ézùla íke	ákpácila ụzọ̀

After the Conditional, use /íhe gà emé/ 'something will happen'.

Before the Consecutive, use /ó ricara ńri/ 'he finished eating'.

Before the Sequential (a label for what was described in Lesson 10 as "a special type of Consecutive"), use /ànyị gà eríca nrí, é mesya/ 'we will finish eating, and then'.

Stems: Low, Step "shut the door"	Stems: $\frac{\text{Step}}{\text{Low}}$), Low "leave"	Stems: $\frac{\text{Step}}{\text{Low}}$), Low Pronoun Object "take it out"
ị̀kwàci ụ́zọ̀	ị̀hápụ̀	
ọ́ kwàciri ụ́zọ̀	ọ́ hápụ̀rụ	
ọ́ ($\frac{\text{nà}}{\text{gà}}$) ákwàcí ụzọ̀	ọ́ ($\frac{\text{nà}}{\text{gà}}$) ahápụ̀	ọ́ ($\frac{\text{nà}}{\text{gà}}$) ewépụ́ yá
kwàcíe ụzọ̀	hápụ̀	wépụ́ yá
ọ́ kwàcíela ụzọ̀ Àzụ́ akwàcíela ụzọ̀	ọ́ hápụ̀lá Àzụ́ ahápụ̀lá	
kà ọ́ kwàcíe ụzọ̀	kà ọ́ hapụ̀	kà ó wepụ́ yá
ọ́ kwàcíe ụzọ̀, ...	ọ́ hapụ̀, ...	ó wepụ́ yá, ...
... kwàcíe ụzọ̀	... hápụ̀	... wépụ́ yá
... ọ̀ kwacíe ụzọ̀ ... Àzụ́ àkwacíe ụzọ̀	... ọ̀ hápụ̀ ... Àzụ́ àhápụ̀	... ò wépụ́ yá ... Àzụ́ èwépụ́ yá
ọ̀ kwácịghị ụzọ̀ Àzụ́ akwácighị ụzọ̀	ọ̀ hápụ̀ghị Àzụ́ ahápụ̀ghị	
ákwàcila ụ́zọ̀	áhápụ̀la	

(Remember that, after verbal bases of more than one syllable, a vowel suffix appears only if the final vowel of the base is /i/ or /u/. Thus the suffix appears, where appropriate, after /kpáci/ and /kwàcí/, but not after /hápụ̀/ or /wépụ̀/.)

(Dialect variations may be considerable, but they will generally be systematic in some way.)

Drill 1. The chart on the preceding pages is not simply a formal diagram; use it rather as a frame of reference for saying what you want to say in Igbo. By way of checking your own competence, give the Igbo equivalents for the following; whenever you have to be corrected, or do not know what to say, refer to the chart to find the model for the appropriate construction.

"to eat": írí nri

We ate.

We're eating.

Eat your (pl.) food.

We have eaten.

Let's eat.

When we eat, I'll ask him about your work.

We had a drink and ate.

We're going to look at my pictures and then eat.

We didn't eat this morning.

Don't (pl.) eat that food.

"to sweep the house": ị́zà ụ́lọ̀

I swept the house.

I'm sweeping the house.

Sweep the house.

I have swept the house.

They want me to sweep the house.

When I sweep the house, I'll look for your money.

I did the wash and swept the house.

I'm going to wash the dishes and then sweep the house.

I didn't sweep the house today.

Don't sweep the house just now.

"to open the door": íméghe ụzọ̀

Okoye opened the door.

Okoye is opening the door.

Open the door.

Okoye has opened the door.

Have Okoye open the door.

When Okoye opens the door, what will he see?

Okoye came to my house and opened the door.

Okoye will sweep the compound and then open the door.

Okoye didn't open the door.

Don't open the door.

"to take out the pot": íwépụ̀ ite

They took out the pot.

They're taking out the pot.

Take out the pot (pl.).

They have taken out the pot.

They should take out the pot.

When they take out the pot, they should wash it.

They opened the door and took out the pot.

They will finish eating, and then take out the pot.

They didn't take out the pot.

Don't (pl.) take out the pot.

Drill 2. The "General Negative" in the above chart of course corresponds, in the form given, only to the Past. It is "general" only in the sense that it forms the basis for other negative constructions. First, with reference to what you have already had (in Lessons 8 and 10), be sure you can give the Igbo equivalents of the following:

We aren't eating.

We're not going to eat.

We haven't eaten.

I'm not sweeping the house.

I'm not going to sweep the house.

I haven't swept the house.

Okoye isn't opening the door.

Okoye isn't going to open the door.

Okoye hasn't opened the door.

They aren't taking out the pot.

They aren't going to take out the pot.

They haven't taken out the pot.

Constructions corresponding to other affirmatives, but with a negative meaning, present few problems. First, there is no negative of the infinitive. In constructions in which the infinitive is used, it is the verbal part of the sentence prior to the infinitive which is negated. You should have no trouble with the following:

I don't want to eat right now.

He doesn't want to sweep the house.

Okoye doesn't want to open the door.

They don't want to take out the pot.

Second, a hortative construction with a sort of negative meaning is actually an affirmative hortative, using a verb with a meaning something like "avoid, refrain from, fail" followed by an infinitive. This is a negative only in translation. For example:

Let's not go to market today.	kà anyị ghàrá ịgá ahya taà.
He shouldn't shut the door.	kà ọ́ ghàrá ịkwàci ụ́zọ̀.
He shouldn't take this medicine.	kà ọ́ ghàrá ịŋụ́ ọgwụ́ à.
Let's not eat right now.	kà anyị ghàrá írí nri úgbu à.
They shouldn't tell lies.	kà há ghàrá ịsị asị.

Third, a negative corresponding to the conditional is also expressed indirectly; it is the affirmative conditional /ọ́ bụrụ nà/ plus the "general" negative. For example:

If we don't get money today, we won't be able to buy food.	ọ́ bụrụ nà anyị eŋwéghị egó taà, ànyị agághị èŋwé iké ịzụ́ nri.

If they don't come, when shall we eat?	ọ́ bụrụ nà há abyághị, Ŋ̀gbé óle kà anyị́ gà erí nrí.
If it doesn't rain, let's go to Umuahia tomorrow.	ọ́ bụrụ nà mmírí ezòghị, kà anyị́ gaa Ụmụ̀-áhyà éci.
If you don't see meat in the market, try to buy fish.	ọ́ bụrụ nà ịhụ́ghị́ anụ n'ahya, Ŋwàá ịzụ́ta azụ̀.

Finally, the Consecutive and Sequential constructions have no negative counterparts. It should be reasonably evident that combinations like "He came home and didn't eat dinner" can readily be expressed as separate clauses in sentences like "He came home, but he didn't eat dinner."

It may also be noted that the "Stative" construction is not included in the chart above. The reason for this is that only a few verbs are used in the stative. The stative is like the past without the past suffix. The general negative can function for the stative as well as the past, though some dialects may distinguish them. Another shortened form you may hear is the completive without the /lá/ suffix; this is characteristic of highly informal, colloquial style. For example:

ị́ sị́ala ásị.	(normal)	You've told a lie.
ị́ sị́a ásị.	(informal)	You're a liar!

Drill 3. The summary of verbal constructions at the beginning of this lesson includes only one usage of what is labelled "Sequential". This construction is also used after a form /tútu/ with the meaning 'before (something happens)', as in the following; the main clause may include any construction.

I saw him before he ate.	á hụ̀rụ m yá, tútu ò ríe nrí.
I'll see him before he eats.	á gà m ahụ́ yá, tútu ò ríe nrí.
I want to finish reading this book before I go to market.	á cọ̀rọ m ị́gụ́ca akwụkwọ à, tútu m̀ gáa ahyá.
I went to sleep before I finished my work.	á ràra m ụrá, tútu m̀ rụ́ca ọrụ́ m.
We finished eating before our friends came.	ànyị́ rịcara ńri, tútu ndi enyí ányị àbyá.
I stayed outside quite a while before they opened the door for me.	á nọ̀rọ m ọtụ́tụ ogè n'ezí, tútu hà eméghere ḿ ụzọ̀.

I told him to finish his work before the sun sets.	á gwàra m yá kà ọ́ rụca ọrụ́ ya, tútu anya aŋwụ́ àdaá.
He didn't close the door before it started to rain.	ọ̀ kwácighị́ ụ́zọ̀, tútu m̀mírí èbído izò.
It threatened to rain before we got to Onitsha.	m̀mírí rùru, tútu ànyị́ àgárue Ọ̀nịca.
Don't go home before you finish your work.	álála nụ̀ ụ́lọ̀, tútu unù arụ́ca ọrụ unù.

In at least three of the above examples, "until" could have been used in English as well as "before"; Igbo does not distinguish these closely related ideas. Here are a few more instances:

I kept on working until the sun set.	á rụ̀gidere m ọ́rụ, tútu anya aŋwụ́ àdaá.
We stayed in the house until it stopped raining.	ànyị́ nọ̀rọ n'íme ụlọ̀, tútu m̀mírí àhápụ̀ ízò.

Drill 4. Only a few relative constructions have been used up to this point. Now they can be treated systematically. Two types of relative clauses must be distinguished: (1) those whose subject is different from the antecedent noun, and (2) those whose subject is the same as the antecedent noun. Even in English, these two types of relatives behave differently. For the first type, the use of a relative pronoun is optional -- we can say "the man whom I saw" or "the man I saw". For the second type, a relative pronoun is required -- we can only say "the man who came". In Igbo, too, these two types of relatives involve different constructions. In this drill, only the first type is considered, with the relative clause having a subject different from the antecedent noun.

In a large number of instances, it would appear that this type of relative is completely unmarked in Igbo; what is translated as a relative clause is a perfectly normal sentence used after a noun -- if the noun ends with a non-low tone, a pronoun subject in the relative clause has same tone, but even that is not too surprising. However, certain combinations require the application of two important rules involving tone. First, if the relative has a noun subject with the tones step-low (like and including /únù/), the second tone of the noun becomes step. Second, if what precedes the relative clause ends with non-low tone, then a noun subject with the tones low-step (like and including /ànyị́/) takes the tones same-same (as after an infinitive or negative).

The first group of sentences below represents the key examples; note the third and the last two.in particular.

The cloth he bought is torn.	ákwà ọ́ zụ̀rụ akáala ŋká.
The cloth we bought is torn.	ákwà anyị́ zụ̀rụ akáala ŋká.
The cloth you bought is torn.	ákwà únú zụ̀rụ akáala ŋká.
The food he brought is all gone.	ńri o wètara agwụ́la.
The food we brought is all gone.	ńri anyị́ wètara agwụ́la.
The food you brought is all gone.	ńri unú wètara agwụ́la.

The man you saw in the market came here this morning.	ŋwóke ahụ̀ ị́ hụ̀rụ n'áhya byàra ébe à n'ụtụ́tụ́ à.
The clothes that I washed are dry.	ákwà ḿ sàra akọ́ọla.
The book I showed you is mine.	ákwụkwọ m zíri gị́ bụ̀ ŋke ḿ.
The basket he gave me is nice.	ŋ̀kata ó nyère ḿ dị̀ ḿmá.
The food she cooked was delicious.	ńri o síri tọrọ ụtọ́.
The work they did was fine.	ọ́rụ ha rụ̀rụ dị ḿmá.
That big house we saw on the way to Onitsha belongs to the chief of this town.	ụ́lọ̀ nnúkwu ahụ̀ anyị́ hụ̀rụ n'ụ́zọ́ Ọ̀nịca bụ ŋke ézé òbodó à.
Give me the papers you brought.	nyé nụ̀ ḿ akwụkwọ unú wètara.
They ate all the food we cooked.	há riri ńri níile anyị síri.
Show me the letter you wrote.	zí ḿ akwụkwọ i dère.
I don't know what he did.	à mághị́ m ihe o mère.
I don't know who he saw.	à mághị́ m onye ọ hụ̀rụ.
I don't know who-all he saw.	à mághị́ m ndi ḿmadụ̀ ọ́ hụ̀rụ.
I don't know where they went.	à mághí m ebe ha gàra.
Here's the book you left at my house.	ŋ̀ké à bụ ákwụkwọ ị hápụ̀rụ n'ụ́lọ̀ ḿ.

Do you know where he's going?	ị mara ébe ọ nà agá.
What's the name of the book you're reading?	gị́nị́ bụ̀ áhà ákwụkwọ ị nà agụ́.
The children I take care of can read well.	ụ́mụ̀ ḿ nà elégide anyá ŋwère íke ịgụ́ akwụkwọ mmá.
The car he drives is big and new. (= The big car he drives is new.)	ụ́gbọ àla nnúkwú ọ nà ányà dị ọ́hụrụ́.
The bridge he is building is big.	àkwa ọ́ nà amá dị nnúkwú.

The house you will see on the right is his.	ụ́lọ̀ únú gà ahụ́ n'aka nrí bụ̀ ŋke yá.
Where we're going there'll be lots of palm oil.	éte anyị gà agá, m̀mánụ ŋkwụ́ gà erí nné.
Whatever you do will be fine.	íhe ọ́bụlà ị́ gà emé gà adị́ mmá.

Drill 5. In both types of relative clauses, the only permitted verbal constructions are the past (a rather sorry label, as will be abundantly obvious in this drill) and the stative; remember that the "present" and "future" are simply the stative forms /nà/ and /gà/ plus a verbal noun. For the second type of relative, the subject of which is the same as its antecedent, it is particularly convenient to note that it is precisely these constructions that are characterized by low tone. In this type of relative, the low tone of the verbal form is raised to step (and syllables after the first are same). Before the verbal relative form, the antecedent behaves like a noun before a noun with initial low: final low becomes step. After the verbal relative form, both step-same and low-step become same-same, as after infinitives and negatives.

A great many descriptive expressions in Igbo consist of this type of relative, often corresponding to an English adjective. The Igbo relatives are derived from expressions consisting of a verb plus a noun; where appropriate, the underlying expressions are also given in the material below, indented. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that Igbo has very few words -- possibly none -- that can properly be called "adjectives". Expressions that translate English adjectives are in some cases best analyzed as nouns; others function exactly like numerals; some are clearly verbs; and many consist of a verb plus a noun, frequently with the two derived from the same root. The last of these, in a normal relative construction, parallels an English attributive adjective.

That man who came to my house is my friend.	ŋwóke ahụ́ byára n'ụlọ̀ ḿ bụ̀ ényí ḿ.
I don't know who did that.	à mághị́ m onye mére ŋ̀ke áhụ̀.
The man who bought my car lives in that house.	ónye zụ́rụ ụgbọ àla ḿ bí n'ụ́lọ̀ áhụ̀.
I don't know what happened.	à mághị́ m ihe mére.
The cup that was on the left is mine.	ikó dị́rị n'aka èkpe bụ ŋke ḿ.
We who saw what happened couldn't do a thing.	ànyị́ hụ́rụ ihe mére èŋwéghị́ ike imé ihe ọ́bụlà.

All the people who live in this town are our friends.	ńdi mmadụ̀ níile bí n'òbodó à bụ ńdi enyí ányị.
That book (which is) on the chair is yours.	ákwụkwọ ahụ́ dị n'elu océ bụ̀ ŋke gị.
He comes from a town near Enugu.	ó sí obodó dịdèbe Énugwú.
The woman who is doing the wash wants to work for you.	ŋwânyị áhụ́ ná asa akwà cọrọ ịrụ́rụ unù ọ́rụ.
I don't know who's going to go to Umuahia tomorrow.	à mághị m onye gá aga Ụmụ̀-áhyà éci.
The people who are singing are from Abakaliki.	ńdi mmadụ́ ná abụ̀ ábụ̀ si Abákalíki.
It's fire.	ọ́ bụ̀ ọ́kụ.
It's hot.	'ị ọ́kụ.
Bring hot soup in this pot.	wètá ofe dị ọkụ n'ime íte à.
This knife is sharp.	mmá à dị ile.
I'm looking for a sharp knife.	á nà m acọ́ mmá dị íle.
It is black.	ọ́ dị ojí. - ó jiri ojí.
I killed a black snake in the compound.	é gbùru m ágwọ dị oji n'èzí. or: ó gbùru m ágwọ jíri oji n'èzí.
She is beautiful.	ọ́ màra mmá.
I saw a beautiful woman in town.	á hụ̀rụ m ŋwânyị mára mmá n'òbodo.
They are different.	há dị ícè ícè.
They sell peanuts, pepper, fish, crayfish, fruit, and various other things in the market.	há nà eré ekere, ósè, ázụ̀, ịhyá, ŋ́kpụrụ osisi, nà íhe dị icè ícè n'áhya.
This food is delicious.	ńri à tọrọ ụtọ́.
The Igbo people cook many kinds of delicious food.	ńdi Ìgbo na esí ọ́tụtụ ụkpa nrí tọ́rọ ụtọ.
It is small.	ó pèrè mpé. - ọ́ dị mpé.
When I was a child, I lived in a small house.	ŋ́gbe ḿ bụ̀ ŋwátà, é biri m n'úló pére mpe.
This road is narrow.	ụ́zọ́ à kpara ŋ́kpà.
You will see a narrow road on the left.	ị gà ahụ́ ụzọ́ kpára ŋkpà n'áka èkpe.

Notes:

With the introduction of relative clauses, several words have been used more frequently and systematically than before. Superficially, it may seem as if /ónye/ is a sort of "relative pronoun" like English 'who', and that other Igbo words correspond to 'what (which, that), when, where' and presumably also 'why, how'. To leave it at that, however, would only confuse the patterns of Igbo usage. A more careful analysis is needed.

In English, relative words like 'who' often have a dual function: they substitute for nouns, and at the same time signal the relative nature of the clauses they introduce. Thus in 'I saw who came', 'who' is relative, but it also substitutes for 'the person'; we can also say, of course, 'I saw the person who came' or 'I saw the one who came'.

In Igbo, the relative function is unnecessary in a separate word. The relative clause is already fully marked: one type by a subject where a subject would not otherwise belong, and the other type by a special relative tone. Thus /ónye/ and words used like it are not relative in meaning at all, since the relative is separately marked; rather, they are merely substitutes for nouns. In fact, they are themselves nouns, but nouns with a meaning general enough to include other nouns. The actual functions of the parts of an Igbo relative may be illustrated as follows:

ọ́ hụ̀rụ	óbe	anyị	gàra.
He saw	the-place	that-we	went.

ọ́ hụ̀rụ	ómye	byára.
He saw	the-person	who-came.

With reference to 'thing', 'time', and 'place', Igbo has two words for each category. You have learned /íhe/ in phrases like /íhe mére/ 'what happened', and /ŋ̀ke/ in phrases like /ŋ̀ke ḿ/ 'mine'. Of these two, /íhe/ has a more general meaning, like 'the thing, whatever it is'; /ŋ̀ke/ is 'a particular item, the one'. The two may be contrasted in sentences like the following:

á hụ̀rụ m íhe ị zụ̀rụ.	'I saw what you bought.'
á hụ̀rụ m ŋke ị zụ̀rụ.	'I saw the one you bought.'

Somewhat similarly, /ŋ̀gbe/ means 'time' in a rather general sense. There is another word /ógè/, which means 'a particular occasion'. Only the latter of these can be used with a numeral: /ógè atọ́/ 'three times'.

There are also two words referring to 'place'. Of these, /óbe/ certainly covers the more general meaning comparable to /íhe/ and

/ŋ̀gbe/. A second reference to 'place', /[illegible]ems to have the more specific reference 'spot, particular [illegible]r some speakers, but others seem to have no contrast or si[illegible]t use /ŋ̀ga/.

With reference to persons, there is a [illegible]rable distinction of a more general term and a more spec[illegible], but in this case a distinction of number is also involve[illegible]di/ is the more general term, but in its generality also implie[illegible]lurality. /ónye/ is the specific term, but in its particularity also implies singularity. These words are also used in a number of noun phrases like /ónye ŋkúsi/ 'teacher', /ńdi ŋkúsi/ 'teachers'.

All of these words can be used before relative clauses. Note the parallelism of reference:

	thing	place	time	person
General:	ìhe	óbe	ŋ̀gbe	ńdi
Particular:	ŋ̀ke	ŋ̀ga	ógè	ónye

Most Igbo nouns do not have a singular-plural distinction, as you know. However, a phrase consisting of /ńdi/ plus any noun can be used to indicated a plurality of that noun, but specifically with the implication that they are being considered as individuals, not as a group. Thus /ńdi ŋ̀kata/ is 'certain baskets'. In other than relatives, /ńdi ḿmadụ̀/ is the usual expression for 'people'; and people are by definition considered as individuals. Another personal noun, /ŋwátà/ 'child' has a real plural /ụ́mụ̀/; it is this, strangely enough, which is used to form plurals for 'man' and 'woman': /ụ́mụ̀ ŋwóké/ 'men', /ụ́mụ̀ ŋwányị/ 'women'.

An example in this lesson has also provided a striking case of the distinction between the statives /bụ̀/ and /dị̀/:

ọ́ bụ̀ ọ́kụ.	It is fire.
ọ́ dị̀ ọ́kụ.	It is hot.

It is not the last word in these sentences that differs, of course; in both cases it is a noun, perhaps best reflected by 'burning'. The point is that /bụ̀/ expresses identification. /dị̀/, on the other hand, expresses description in the above; in other cases, of course, it also expresses location for inanimate (or at least impersonal) nouns.

Lesson 12.

By this time, all of the really major elements of Igbo structure adequate for a "compromise" dialect have been pretty well covered. What remains is a number of details, few if any of which will present any difficulty or surprise. From this point on, your primary tasks will be to crystallize your mastery of the grammatical structure, add more vocabulary to your repertoire, and build up smoothness in your speech. In the process, the relatively few and minor grammatical points that remain will take care of themselves. At this stage in learning, remember that continued careful attention to accurate pronunciation is essential to accurate grammatical usage, and thus to being understood. Although a major purpose of the remaining lesson materials will be to develop more extensive comprehension and more fluent speaking, a conscious application of the accuracy that has been emphasized from the start will do more than anything else to develop these very skills.

Drill 1. Uses of /kà/. It is sometimes difficult, and often unimportant, to say whether forms that sound identical in a language are different uses of "the same" word or actually different words. Is 'band' one word or two in the phrases 'wedding band' and 'marching band'? Is 'top' one word or two in 'reach the top' and 'spin the top'? Anyway, what difference does it make? In Igbo, a syllable /kà/ has three distinct usages. Whether these represent three words that happen to sound alike, or three usages of one and the same word, makes little difference. All that counts is to master the usages. Two of them you have had some experience with, but they are also reviewed below. The third usage is new.

First, /kà/ is used after a word or phrase at the beginning of a sentence, other than the subject, to give emphasis to that word or phrase (compare Lesson 5, p. 31). A number of interrogative words and phrases regularly occur in this usage, though a few interrogative phrases are used without /kà/. If the initial emphasized element is not interrogative, it is introduced by /ọ́ bụ̀/ 'it is'.

What are you doing?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ nà emé.
What does he want?	gị́nị́ kà ọ́ nà acọ́.
What will they say about it?	gị́nị́ kà há gà ekwú bànyére yá.
When will the party start?	ŋ̀gbé óle kà ómere gà ebído.
When did your father die?	ŋ̀gbé óle kà ńnà gị́ ŋwụ̀rụ.
Where are you (pl.) going?	ébe óle kà únú nà agá.
Where did you put my book?	ébe óle kà í dèbere ákwụkwọ ḿ.
Who is he looking at?	ònyé kà ọ́ nà elé anyá.

It was my brother that you saw.	ọ́ bụ̀ ŋwá ńne ḿ ŋwoké kà ị́ hụ̀rụ.
Is it beef that you bought?	ọ̀ bụ ánụ ehí kà ị́ zụ̀tara.
I wanted hot water, but it was cold water that you brought.	á cọ̀rọ m mmíri ọkụ́, mà ọ́ bụ̀ mmíri oyí kà í wètara.
It's tomorrow that I'm going to Umuahia.	ọ́ bụ̀ éci kà ḿ gà agá Ụmụ̀-áhyà.
It was at the market that I saw your students.	ọ́ bụ̀ n'áhya kà ḿ hụ̀rụ ụ́mụ̀ ákwụkwọ gị́.

But without /kà/:

What did you buy at the store?	kèdú ihe ị zụ̀tara n'ụ́lọ̀ áhyá.
Where does your teacher come from?	òléé ebe onye ŋkuzi gị́ sí.

Second, /kà/ is used to introduce the hortative (compare Lesson 9, pp. 59-61), either by itself or after an introductory verbal clause.

Let's rest here.	kà anyị́ zùé iké n'ebe à.
He should try to do it again.	kà ọ́ ŋwàá imé ya ọ̀zọ́.
Let's not have mutton today.	kà anyị́ ghàrá irí anụ atụrụ́ taà.

My teacher told me to read this book this week.	ónye ŋkuzi ḿ gwàra ḿ kà ḿ gụa akwụkwọ à n'ízú à.
I told you to stay here.	á gwàra m gị ka ị́ nọ̀dụ́ n'ebe à.
My brother made it possible for me to go to school.	Ŋwá ńne ḿ ŋwoké mère ka ḿ ŋwee iké ịgá akwụkwọ.
I'll see to it that he does it.	á gà m emé kà ó mee yá.
I want them to sing for you.	á cọ̀rọ m ka há bụ̀ára unù ábụ̀.
He wants us to help him.	ọ́ cọ̀rọ ka anyị́ nyere yá aka.
~~We helped him build his house.~~	~~ànyị́ nyère ya áka kà ọ́ rụa ụlọ̀ yá.~~
~~Please help him cut the grass.~~	~~bíkó, nyére yá aka kà ó gbue ahịhya.~~

Third, /kà/ is used before a verbal expression with the meaning 'as, while, when' (sometimes interchangeable with /Ŋ̀gbe/), and also before a noun in phrases like /ọ́ dị́ ka .../ 'it is like ...' and the corresponding relative /... dị́ kà .../ '(which is) like'. These two uses are grouped together because of their similarity in meaning, reflected in the English 'as'.

As I was going to market, it began to rain.	kà ḿ nà agá ahyá, m̀mírí bidoro ízò.
While I read, my wife did the cooking.	kà ḿ nà agụ́ akwụkwọ, ŋwúnyè ḿ siri ite.
I bought this car while I was working in Onitsha.	á zụ̀rụ m ụ́gbọ àlá à, kà ḿ nà arụ́ ọrụ́ n'Ọ̀nịca.
While I was coming here, I met a friend of yours.	kà ḿ nà abyá ebe à, á hụ̀rụ m ótù ényi gị́.
I saw them working on the farm.	á hụ̀rụ m ha ka há nà arụ́ ọrụ́ n'ugbó.
I saw your father working on his farm.	á hụ̀rụ m ńnà gị́ kà ọ́ nà arụ́ ọrụ́ n'ugbó ya.
I heard your students singing.	á nụ̀rụ m ụ́mụ̀ ákwụkwọ gị́, ka há nà ábụ̀ ábụ̀.
Did you hear the birds singing last evening?	ị nụrụ ka ụ́mụ̀ ńnụ̀nụ́ nà ábụ̀ ábụ̀ n'ábâlị́ gára aga.
We saw a lot of men and women singing and dancing.	ànyị́ hụ̀rụ ọtụ́tụ ụmụ̀ ŋwóké nà ụ́mụ̀ ŋwânyi, kà há nà ábụ̀ ábụ̀ ná èté egwú.

His house is like mine.	ụ́lọ̀ yá dị́ ka ŋke ḿ.
That blouse is like one I saw in a store in Onitsha.	ùwé ahụ̀ dị ka ŋke ḿ hụ̀rụ n'ụ́lọ̀ áhyá n'Ọ̀nịca.
Palm oil is not like peanut oil.	m̀mánụ ŋkwụ́ adị́ghị kà mmánụ ekere.
A teacher's work is not like a farmer's.	ọ́rụ onye ŋkuzi adíghi kà ŋke ónye ugbó.
"A pretty girl is like a melody."	ŋwânyị́ mára mmá dị́ ka ábụ̀.
I want to buy shoes like yours.	á cọ̀rọ m ị́zụ́ akpụkpọ ụkwụ́ dị́ kà ŋke gị́.
I want to buy a blouse like the one you bought in that store in Onitsha.	á cọ̀rọ m ị́zụ́ uwe dị́ kà ŋke ị́ zụ̀tara n'ụ́lọ̀ áhya ahụ́ dị́ n'Ọ̀nịca.
They sell various things, like blouses, gowns, shoes, and caps.	há rère íhe dị́ icè ícè, dị́ kà ùwé, ágbada, ákpụkpọ ụkwụ́, nà okpú.

Drill 2. In the first group of sentences below, you will be using still another syllable /kà/. This one, however, is quite different in meaning and usage from anything found in the preceding drill. Here, /kà/ is the stative of a verb /ịká/, which means 'surpass, exceed'. A somewhat literal translation of the first sentence, for example, is 'This soup surpasses that (one) [in] good taste'; this is a common construction in Igbo for saying things like 'This soup tastes better than that.'

In the second group of sentences below, the English equivalents for the first several are the same as those in the first group; the Igbo sentences are alternative ways of saying the same thing. In these, you begin with the description (e.g., 'This soup tastes good'), and then introduced the compared item by /kárịa/. This /kárịa/ is derived from /íkárị/, the same verb /ịká/ 'surpass' with an extension /rị́/ (which adds no special meaning but is required in this construction). The form /kárịa/ is a consecutive, though the rules given in Lessons 10 and 11 would lead you to expect /kárị/, without a suffix (since the final vowel is not /i/ or /u/). Historically, the suffix appears to be "frozen" in this particular case; it was once probably regular with all two-syllable bases. In some areas, however, you will hear the more regular /kárị/; you may also hear /kára/, apparently with a different verbal extension. In any case, these sentences can be more literally translated to express the consecutive; for the first, for example, 'This soup tastes good and surpasses that (one).' Note that, because of the idiomatic expressions involved, you cannot make completely automatic transfers from all of the sentences in the first group to all of those in the second; you have to know the appropriate descriptive expressions in each case.

The sentences in the third group have similar meanings. Here the verb of a descriptive expression is compounded with /kárị/; the construction is "past", but the meaning is like that of a stative.

In all of the material in this drill -- as has happened so often before -- the explanations are far more difficult than the actual Igbo sentences. Statements like the above are unavoidable; they answer most of the "why?" questions you will be tempted to ask -- and which you should not ask unless you have studied the above paragraphs with meticulous care. But if you learn a few key examples by heart, you will learn to understand and use many more expressions by simple analogy.

This soup tastes better than that.	ófe à ka ŋke áhụ̀ ụtọ́.
Your house is bigger than ours.	ụ́lọ̀ únù ka ŋké ányị ibù.
My husband is taller than hers.	dí ḿ kà dí yá ogologo.
This road is wider than the Aba road.	ụ́zọ́ à ka ụ́zọ́ Ába m̀bára.
This book is more expensive than that one.	ákwụkwọ à kà ŋke áhụ̀ daá ọnụ́.

This soup tastes better than that.	ófe à tọrọ ụtọ́ karịa ŋ̀ke áhụ̀.
Your house is bigger than ours.	ụ́lọ̀ únù buru íbù kárịa ŋké ányị.
My husband is taller than hers.	dí ḿ dị ógologo karịa di yá.
This road is wider than the Aba road.	ụ́zọ́ à sara mbára kárịa ụzọ́ Ába.
This book is more expensive than that one.	ákwụkwọ à dàra ọ́nụ́ karịa ŋ̀ke áhụ̀.
His gown is more beautiful than mine.	ágbada yá màra ḿmá karịa ŋ̀ke ḿ.
I want a bigger house than this one.	á cọ̀rọ m ụ́lọ́ búru ibù kárịa ŋ̀ké à.
A dog is smaller than a leopard.	ŋ́kịtá pèrè mpé karịa agụ́.
The road to Onitsha is longer than the road to Uyo.	ụ́zọ́ Ọ̀nịca toro ógologo karịa ụzọ́ Úyo.
A wild pig is worse than a bush-cow.	ézì ọ́hya jọ̀rọ ńjọ karịa ehi ọhyá.
He has more money than Obi.	ó ŋwère égó karịa Óbi.
Okoye is better educated now than last year.	Òkóyè mara ákwụkwọ úgbu à kárịa afọ́ gára aga.
An iroko is taller than a palm tree.	ọ́jị̀ toro ógologo karịa ŋkwụ́.
This cloth is whiter than that.	ákwá à cakarịrị ákwà áhụ̀ n'ọcá.
This stone is heavier than that one.	òkútá à nyịkarịrị ŋke áhù n'árọ.
A chimpanzee is bigger than a monkey.	àdáká bùkarịrị eŋwe n'íbù.
An antelope is smarter than a sheep.	éle màkarịrị átụrụ́ n'ihe.

(Note: In this last group, the /n'/ introducing the last word may be omitted.)

Drill 3. A number of constructions have been introduced in which two or more distinct actions are referred to in a single sentence. These involve such ideas as purpose, actions in sequence, and subordinate plus primary actions. The first group of sentences below is simply a sampling of these constructions for purposes of review and summary. There is one further possibility of combining two or more actions in a single sentence; this is to express simultaneous actions. Although there is nothing involving new verb forms in these expressions, separate statements are necessary for different verbal constructions:

1. After a past, a second and simultaneous action is expressed by the verb stem alone -- no prefix, no suffix, just the stem with its stem tone. In some combinations, the first verb may be stative in form, particularly in some areas.

2. In the present, the first verb may also be stative in some

combinations; perhaps surprisingly, the stative may be used in expressions of action now going on, and the ordinary present (/nà/ plus the verbal noun) in expressions of customary action. In either case the second, simultaneous action is expressed by the verbal noun, without repeating /nà/, and without a pronoun.

3. After a future, (/gà/ plus the verbal noun), the second and simultaneous action may be expressed by either the stem alone (as in the past) or the verbal noun (as in the present), without any apparent difference in meaning; the stem alone may be preferred by some speakers.

4. After an imperative, the second and simultaneous action is expressed by a second imperative. (This is also true, as noted in Lesson 11, for consecutive actions in the imperative; there is no contrast here between consecutive and simultaneous actions.)

The learning problem here is not in the Igbo grammar as such, but rather in the fact that Igbo uses a combination of simultaneous actions to express some ideas which are quite differently expressed in English. For example, Igbo uses a combination of verbs meaning 'follow ... go' (/sò/ ... /gá/) where we say 'go with ...' (expressing accompaniment). Again, Igbo uses a combination meaning 'use ... do' (/jí/ ... /mé/) where we say 'do ... with ...' (expressing instrument). A combination 'drive a car go to ...' (/nyà ụ́gbọ́ ga .../) corresponds to English 'drive to ...'. In some instances, we even use an expression that seems to imply purpose where Igbo views the situation as simultaneous actions, as in the equivalent of 'He stood up to speak'. If you try to translate English grammar -- if you assume, that is, that Igbo grammar will match English grammar -- you will be hopelessly lost. But if you analyze the situation you are talking about, and look for the simultaneity of actions, you will be able to master the Igbo expressions quickly. There is nothing unusual about their form; the only problem is the usage of words.

Actually, there is one detail of form which is indeed unusual. In the past, and in one of the alternatives for the future, the second, simultaneous action is, as noted above, expressed by the verb stem alone. If this second verb stem has low tone, you would certainly expect the tone sequence step-same (e.g., /ánụ/) to remain unchanged; a verb stem such as /bè/ does not have step tone, and it is not a noun -- the conditions under which /ánụ/ becomes /ánụ́/. But, in the expressions for simultaneous action, precisely this unexpected tonal alternation does occur. When 'cutting meat' is the second in a pair of simultaneous actions, it is /... bè ánụ́/ -- at least for the Igbo speakers we have heard to date!

Now for the Igbo sentences -- which, once more, are a great deal simpler than the above notes would seem to suggest. Follow the material one step at a time, and it will really not be as difficult as you expect. The first group of sentences is simply a summary and review of other verbal combinations; the remaining groups are the new expressions for simultaneous actions.

They went to market to buy food.	há gàra áhya įzų́ nri.
They went to market and bought food.	há gàra áhya zųa nrí.
I'm going to eat and then read.	á gà m erí nrí, é mesya m̀ gų́a akwųkwǫ.
When I finished my work I rested.	ŋ̀gbe ḿ rų̀cara ǫ́rų ḿ, é zùru m íke.
When I finish this work I'll rest.	ḿ rųca ǫrų à, á gà m ézù íke.

They sat and chatted.	há nǫ̀rǫ n'óce kpa ŋkàtá.
He stood and spoke.	ǫ́ kwų̀rų ǫ́tǫ kwu okwú.
He carried a load (going) to market.	ó bù íbu gá ahyá.
or:	ó bùru íbu gá ahyá.
That woman carried a lot of yams to market this morning.	ŋwânyį áhų̀ bu ǫtų́tų jí ga ahyá n'ų̀tų́tų́ à. (or use /bùru/́)
They went to town with us.	há sò anyį́ ga òbodo.
or:	há sòro anyį́ ga òbodo.
I went to school with his brother.	é sò m ŋwá ńne yá ŋwoké ga akwųkwǫ.
All the students sang with us.	ų́mų̀ ákwųkwǫ niíle sò anyį́ bų̀ ábų̀.
She washed her hands with her ring on.	ǫ́ gbàra ǫ́là yá sa aká ya.
She wore a pretty dress to the party.	ó yì uwé mára mmá ga omere.
He drove to Onitsha last week.	ǫ́ nyàra ų́gbǫ ga Ǫ̀nica n'ízú gára aga.
We came to Nigeria by plane.	ànyį́ jì ų́gbǫ elú bya Nàijíria.
We came from Onitsha to Umuahia by car.	ànyį́ jì ų́gbǫ àla sí Ǫ̀nįca byá Ų́mų̀-áhyà.
She cooked a delicious fish soup.	ó jì ázų̀ té ofe tǫ́rǫ ųtǫ.
I cut the meat with this knife.	é ji m ḿmá à be ánų́.

They're sitting and chatting.	há nǫ̀ n'óce àkpá ŋkàtá.
He's carrying a load to market.	ó bù íbu àgá ahyá.
Are you washing your hands with soap?	ì ji ńcà asá aká gį.
~~She's pounding yams in a mortar.~~	~~ó jì íkwè asų́ jí.~~
What are you doing with that?	gį́nį́ kà í jì ŋke áhų̀ emé.
What are you doing with my knife?	gį́nį́ kà í jì ḿmà ḿ èmé.
Where are you driving to?	ébe óle kà į́ nyà ų́gbǫ àgá.

They sit and chat every day.	há nà ánọ̀ n'óce àkpá ŋkàtá kwà ụ́bọ̀cị.
He rides a bicycle to school.	ọ́ nà ányà ígwè agá ụlọ̀ akwụkwọ.
He wears a cap at work.	ọ́ nà ékpú ókpu àrụ́ ọrụ́.
We drive to Enugu every week.	ànyị́ nà ányà ụ́gbọ́ àgá Enugwú kwà ízù.
What do you use that for?	gị́nị́ kà únụ́ nà ejí ŋ̀ke áhụ̀ emé.
She cooks delicious meat soup.	ọ́ nà ejí anụ́ ètè ofe tọ́rọ ụtọ.
We have wine with dinner.	ànyị́ nà aŋụ́ mmánya èrí nrí.

My father is going to drive to Aba tomorrow.	ńnà ḿ gà ányà ụ́gbọ́ ga Ǎba eci.
or:	ńnà ḿ gà ányà ụ́gbọ́ àgá Ába eci.
What are you going to do with that knife?	gị́nị́ kà ị́ gà ejí mmà áhụ̀ mé.
or:	... èmé.
We're going to go to Nigeria by plane.	ànyị́ gà ejí ụgbọ elú àgá Nàịjíríà. (or: ... gá N.)
I'm going to go to a movie with them.	á gà m ésò ha gá sinemá.
or:	á gà m ésò ha agá sinemá.

Drill 4. When we want to avoid specifying a particular personal subject in English, we frequently use 'you' with an impersonal meaning: 'You just don't do it that way.' In Igbo, one (another English impersonal) is more likely to use /há/ 'they' in an impersonal sense. In English, we also avoid mentioning the subject by using a "passive": 'The plate got broken'. In Igbo, a comparable idea is expressed by a genuinely impersonal subject pronoun, /á/ or /é/. An English passive is frequently a useful translation, but remember that there is no "passive" in Igbo in the sense that we know it in European languages. However the English is expressed in the following, it is always possible to substitute (though often awkwardly, and that is why it is not done here) a sentence like 'One broke the plate.'

The plate got broken.	é tìwara éfere ahụ̀.
Dinner's ready.	ó síela nrí.
It is called /mbè/ (a tortoise).	á nà akpọ́ yá mbè.
Rice is cooked with salt.	á nà ejí nnú èsí ósikapa.
If they are called, they will come.	á kpọọ há, há gà abyá.
~~Yams are pounded in a mortar.~~	~~á nà ejí ìkwè asụ́ jí.~~

Drill 5. Nouns in Igbo may be joined by using /nà/, translatable as 'and'. If one of the items being joined is a pronoun, there is a special form for 'I', /m̀mụ́/; frequently the final vowel is absorbed into the preceding nasal, and you will hear /m̀ḿ/. For the other two singular pronouns, the corresponding forms are /gị́/ and /yá/. The Igbo equivalents of the English plural pronouns are nouns in any case. The singular forms /m̀mụ́/, /gị́/, and /yá/ may also be used in place of the usual subject pronouns to indicate special emphasis or contrast.

He and I went to school today.	m̀mụ́ nà yá gàra ụ́lọ̀ ákwụkwọ taà.
A friend of mine and I went to a movie last evening.	m̀mụ́ nà ényi ḿ gàra sinemá n'àbalị́ gára aga.
I want you and him to work today.	á cọ̀rọ m ka gị́ nà yá rụa ọrụ́ taà.
I ride a bicycle to town, but he drives a car.	m̀mụ́ nà ányà ígwè agá òbodo, mà yá nà ányà ụ́gbọ́ àgá.
If you'll cook dinner, I'll do the dishes.	ọ́ bụrụ nà gị́ sie nrí, m̀mụ́ gà asá efere.
They worked last evening, but I I stayed home and read.	há rụ̀rụ ọ́rụ n'abalí gára aga, mà mmụ́ nọ̀ n'ụ́lọ̀ gụ́ akwụkwọ.

Drill 6. A brief narrative is given below. Grammatically, there is nothing new in it. Most of the vocabulary is familiar too, but there are a few items that may be new to you. They are the following:

íru:	a noun meaning 'face, front'
ézè:	'chief'
ị́dịdèbe:	'to be near' (used in the relative below)
òrimiri:	'river'; you will also hear /òsimiri/
ítè anya:	'to be a long time'; /ò téghị̀ ánya/ 'it wasn't long'
íịí ọsọ:	'make haste' (/ọ́sọ/ 'a race')
ílárụ ụra:	'go to sleep' (/ụ̀rá/, noun, 'sleeping'); different speakers may prefer other expressions.

First listen to this narrative without following either the Igbo or the English translation given after it. Get as much out of it as you can. Then read through the English translation only, and listen to the Igbo a few more times. When you can follow it fairly well -- but not until then -- study the Igbo transcription in detail, comparing with the English translation. Finally, practice reading it aloud, and finally retelling the story without reading.

àbalị̀ atọ́ gára aga, m̀mụ́ nà ényì ḿ bụ́ Ŋ̀wáŋkwọ gàra n'íru ézi ụlọ̀ ézé òbodó ányị̀, ígwù égwu. ụ́lọ̀ áhụ̀ dị́dèbe orimiri Náijà. Ŋ̀gbe anyị́ rùru ébe ahụ̀, ànyị́ hụ̀rụ ọtụ́tụ ụmụ̀ ŋwóké nà ụ́mụ̀ ŋwânyị̀, kà há nà eté egwú ná ábụ̀ ábụ̀. kà anyị́ zùcara íke, ànyị́ sòro ha té egwú, bụ́kwàsị́ abụ̀. mà otéghị́ ánya, m̀míri bídoro ízò. màka ŋ̀ké à, ńdi mmádụ̀ dûm ji ọ́sọ la ụlọ̀ há. Ŋ̀gbe ḿ rùru ụ́lọ̀, ǹné ḿ nà ńnà ḿ àlárụla ụ́ra. màka ŋké à, á nọ̀rọ m ọtụ́tụ ogè n'ezí, tútu hà eméghere ḿ ụzọ̀.

Three evenings ago, a friend of mine, Nwankwo, and I went to the front of the compound of the chief of our town to dance (etc.). That house is near the Niger river. When we reached there, we saw a lot of men and women dancing and singing. When we had rested, we joined them in dancing and singing. But it wasn't long (before) it began to rain. So all the people hurriedly went to their homes. When I got home, my mother and father had gone to sleep. So I waited quite a while outside before they opened the door.

Notes:

1. Some different verbs have been used in this lesson with reference to "wearing" different things. These verbs, and others as well, have specific reference to the manner in which a garment (or a piece of jewelry, for that matter) is put on. A "wrapper" (a length of cloth wrapped at the waist) is put on quite differently from a sewn garment (/ùwé/), and thus a different verb is used. Some of the common combinations are as follows:

ị́má akwà:	to put on (and wear) a wrapper
ítí ùwe:	to put on (and wear) a dress (or other sewn garment)
íyí úwe:	(the same in some dialects)
íkpù okpú:	to put on (and wear) a cap
ị́gbá ọlà:	to put on (and wear) a ring
ị́nyà égbè:	to carry a gun on a shoulder strap

Other combinations can be expected. It will not be difficult to

learn a new one, as long as you avoid the pitfall of assuming that a single English word will have one invariable equivalent in Igbo.

2. The English verb 'break' is translated as /ítíwa/ in one sentence in this lesson. Here is another instance of striking non-congruence between languages. /ítíwa/ means 'break' only in the sesne of 'shatter, break in many peaces'; it has nothing to do with such concepts as breaking a stick in two, or breaking something open. Here is a variety of verbs, mostly compound, with somewhat related meanings; each one must be used only in its appropriate connection:

ịwá:	'break open' (as of a kola pod)
ịdọ́bè	'break' (of a rope or string: 'pull - cut')
ịgbàji	'break' (of a stick or other rigid object)
ịdọ́wa	'tear (apart)' (of cloth or paper: 'pull - separate')
ítíwa	'break, shatter' (in pieces: 'beat - separate')
ígbúwa	'split' (of wood: 'kill - split', primarily Onitsha)
ịkpọ́wa	'split' (of wood, as for firewood)

Again, there are undoubtedly a number of other combinations used with reference to particular processes of breaking, taking apart, and separating. The above should be adequate evidence that you cannot expect a single equivalent for a given English word such as 'break'.

3. A reference to pounding yams in a mortar was used in this lesson; the phrase to remember is /ịsụ́ ji/. Yams and cassava are two common items which are pounded in a mortar to give them something of the consistency of mashed potatoes or bread dough; but both are soft and "squushy" to begin with. Some other items which can be pounded in a mortar are hard or crisp to begin with: peanuts (the result of pounding is basically peanut butter), corn (to make corn meal), and other dried things. Pounding such items in a mortar is expressed with a different verb, /ísú/; the similarity between the two verbs is only a coincidence.

4. In the narrative which constitutes Drill 6, there is a form /bụ́kwàsị/ 'and (also) sing'. Since you have learned /ịbụ̀ ábụ̀/, with /bụ̀/ as a stem with low tone, this form seems highly irregular. The explanation involves the special verbal extension /kwàsị/. Like the extension /kwa/, which is variable in tone, same after step or low after low, /kwàsị/ has the meaning 'also'. But /kwàsị/ is used only at the end of a series; it suggests 'and finally'. In tone, /kwàsị/ is invariable; but any stem which precedes it takes a step tone, even it that stem independently has low tone. Thus the

form /bų́kwàsį/ has step tone with /bų́/ because of this particular two-syllable extension, and low-step with /kwàsį/ because that sequence is invariable.

From this point on, there are not many new or difficult problems in Igbo; primarily, there is more vocabulary to be learned. There are, to be sure, a few new constructions and idioms that will require special attention; but for the most part you now have the framework that will enable you to fit new expressions into known patterns, as long as you recognize what the patterns are. This is a good time to make a systematic review of the explanatory notes at the beginning of each lesson and each drill in the materials up to this point. Most of the questions you have will be answered by such a review. In following lessons, there will be very little new grammar; the emphasis will be on connected discourse -- narrative and conversation. The emphasis in learning should be on two major points: *analogy* (constructing almost anything you want to say on the basis of the patterns already learned), and *fluency* (practicing a repertoire of useful questions and statements which you can easily construct).